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THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

THE
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THE SEASONS

*These two volumes form together a
complete edition of Thomson's Poems*

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

JAMES THOMSON

EDITED BY

HENRY D. ROBERTS



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PREFACE

THIS volume is intended to be a companion one to *The Seasons*, published in the same series. The two volumes together form a complete collection of Thomson's poetical works.

It has been compiled chiefly from the 1738 edition, the latest edition of the poems of Thomson published before his death, which occurred in 1748. In some cases, where any poems were printed for the first time after their author's death, the text of the first issue is the one followed. The miscellaneous poems have been grouped as much as possible, and there have been added Thomson's prologues and epilogues to various of his plays, as well as the songs occurring in *Alfred*. The glossary at the end of *The Castle of Indolence* is one which Thomson himself added, and has not been extended.

With reference to the notes, the same plan has been followed as in the companion volume. They will be found together at the end of the book, those by Thomson himself being distinguished by the initial 'T'; the other notes are the work of the present editor. An index of first lines has been also added.

A biographical note, and a critical dissertation on Thomson and his works, by Mr Edmund Gosse, will be found in the volume of the *Seasons*.

HENRY D. ROBERTS.

BRIGHTON, September 1906.

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THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

AN ALLEGORICAL POEM

ADVERTISEMENT

THIS poem being writ in the manner of Spenser, the obsolete words, and a simplicity of diction in some of the lines, which borders on the ludicrous, were necessary to make the imitation more perfect. And the style of that admirable poet, as well as the measure in which he wrote are, as it were, appropriated by custom to all allegorical poems writ in our language; just as in French, the style of Marot, who lived under Francis the First, has been used in tales, and familiar epistles, by the politest writers of the age of Louis the Fourteenth.

CANTO I

The Castle hight of Indolence,
And its false luxury;
Where for a little time, alas!
We lived right jollily.

I

OH ! mortal man, who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate ;
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date :
And, certes, there is for it reason great ;
For, though sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouten that would come a heavier bale,
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

II

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
 With woody hill o'er hill encompassed round,
 A most enchanting wizard did abide,
 Than whom a fiend more fell is no where found.
 It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground ;
 And there a season atween June and May,
 Half prankt with spring, with summer half im-
 browned,
 A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,
 No living wight could work, ne carèd even for play.

III

Was nought around but images of rest :
 Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between :
 And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest
 From poppies breathed ; and beds of pleasant green,
 Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
 Mean-time, unnumbered glittering streamlets played,
 And hurlèd every where their waters sheen ;
 That, as they bickered through the sunny glade,
 Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur
 made.

IV

Joined to the prattle of the purling rills
 Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
 And flocks loud bleating from the distant hills,
 And vacant shepherds piping in the dale :
 And, now and then, sweet Philomel would wail,
 Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
 That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale ;
 And still a coil the grasshopper did keep :
 Yet all these sounds yblent, inclinèd all to sleep.

V

Full in the passage of the vale, above,
A sable, silent, solemn forest stood ;
Where nought but shadowy forms was seen to move,
As Idless fancied in her dreaming mood.
And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, aye waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood ;
And where this valley winded out, below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard, to
flow.

VI

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer-sky.
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures always hovered nigh ;
But whate'er smacked of noyance, or unrest,
Was far, far off expelled from this delicious nest.

VII

The landscape such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where Indolence (for so the wizard hight)
Close-hid his castle, mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checkered day and night.
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate,
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was placed ; and, to his lute, of cruel fate
And labour harsh, complained, lamenting man's estate.

VIII

Thither continual pilgrims crowded still,
From all the roads of earth that pass there by :

For, as they chanced to breathe on neighbouring hill,
 The freshness of this valley smote their eye,
 And drew them ever and anon more nigh ;
 Till clustering round the enchanter false they hung.
 Ymolten with his syren melody ;
 While o'er the enfeebling lute his hand he flung,
 And to the trembling chords these tempting verses
 sung :

IX

' Behold ! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold !
 See all but man with unearned pleasure gay :
 See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
 Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of May.
 What youthful bride can equal her array ?
 Who can with her for easy pleasure vie ?
 From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
 From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly,
 Is all she has to do beneath the radiant sky.

X

Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
 The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
 Ten thousand throats ! that, from the flowering thorn,
 Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love ;
 Such grateful, kindly raptures them emove :
 They neither plough nor sow, ne, fit for flail,
 E'er to the barn the nodding sheaves they drove :
 Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale ;
 Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale.

XI

Outcast of nature, man ! the wretched thrall
 Of bitter-dropping sweat, of sweltry pain,
 Of cares that eat away thy heart with gall,
 And of the vices, an inhuman train,

That all proceed from savage thirst of gain :
 For when hard-hearted interest first began
 To poison earth, Astraea left the plain ;
 Guile, violence, and murder seized on man,
 And, for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers ran.

XII

Come ye, who still the cumbrous load of life
 Push hard up hill ; but, as the farthest steep
 You trust, to gain, and put an end to strife,
 Down thunders back the stone with mighty sweep,
 And hurls your labours to the valley deep,
 For ever vain ; come, and withouten fee,
 I in oblivion will your sorrows steep,
 Your cares, your toils ; will steep you in a sea
 Of full delight : Oh ! come, ye weary wights, to me.

XIII

With me, you need not rise at early dawn
 To pass the joyless day in various stounds ;
 Or, louting low, on upstart fortune fawn,
 And sell fair honour for some paltry pounds ;
 Or through the city take your dirty rounds,
 To cheat, and dun, and lie, and visit pay ;
 Now flattering base, now giving secret wounds ;
 Or prowl in courts of law for human prey,
 In venal senate thief, or rob on broad highway.

XIV

No cocks, with me, to rustic labour call,
 From village on to village sounding clear ;
 To tardy swain no shrill-voiced matrons squall ;
 No dogs, no babes, no wives, to stun your ear ;
 No hammers thump ; no horrid blacksmith sear ;
 Ne noisy tradesman your sweet slumbers start,
 With sounds that are a misery to hear :
 But all is calm, as would delight the heart
 Of Sybarite of old, all nature, and all art.

XV

Here nought but candour reigns, indulgent ease,
 Good-natured lounging, sauntering up and down :
 They who are pleased themselves must always please ;
 On others' ways they never squint a frown,
 Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town.
 Thus, from the source of tender indolence,
 With milky blood the heart is overflown,
 Is soothed and sweetened by the social sense ;
 For interest, envy, pride, and strife are banished hence.

XVI

What, what is virtue, but repose of mind ?
 A pure ethereal calm that knows no storm ;
 Above the reach of wild ambition's wind,
 Above those passions that this world deform,
 And torture man, a proud malignant worm !
 But here, instead, soft gales of passion play,
 And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
 A quicker sense of joy ; as breezes stray
 Across the enlivened skies, and make them still more
 gay.

XVII

The best of men have ever loved repose :
 They hate to mingle in the filthy fray ;
 Where the soul sours, and gradual rancour grows,
 Imbittered more from peevish day to day.
 Even those whom fame has lent her fairest ray,
 The most renowned of worthy wights of yore,
 From a base world at last have stolen away ;
 So Scipio, to the soft Cumæan shore
 Retiring, tasted joy he never knew before.

XVIII

But if a little exercise you choose,
 Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here :

Amid the groves you may indulge the muse,
Or tend the blooms, and deck the vernal year ;
Or, softly stealing, with your watery gear,
Along the brooks, the crimson-spotted fry
You may delude : the whilst, amused, you hear
Now the hoarse stream, and now the zephyr's sigh,
Attuned to the birds, and woodland melody.

XIX

O grievous folly ! to heap up estate,
Losing the days you see beneath the sun ;
When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting fate,
And gives the untasted portion you have won
With ruthless toil and many a wretch undone,
To those who mock you, gone to Pluto's reign,
There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun :
But sure it is of vanities most vain,
To toil for what you here, untoiling, may obtain.'

XX

He ceased. But still their trembling ears retained
The deep vibrations of his witching song ;
That, by a kind of magic power, constrained
To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng.
Heaps poured on heaps, and yet they slipped along
In silent ease ; as when beneath the beam
Of summer-moons, the distant woods among,
Or by some flood all silvered with the gleam,
The soft-embodied fays through airy portal stream.

XXI

By the smooth demon so it ordered was,
And here his baneful bounty first began :
Though some there were who would not further pass,
And his alluring baits suspected han.
The wise distrust the too fair-spoken man ;
Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye.

Not to move on, perdie, is all they can ;
 For do their very best they cannot fly,
 But often each way look, and often sorely sigh.

XXII

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw,
 With sudden spring he leaped upon them straight ;
 And, soon as touched by his unhallowed paw,
 They found themselves within the cursèd gate,
 Full hard to be repassed, like that of fate.
 Not stronger were of old the giant crew,
 Who sought to pull high Jove from regal state ;
 Though feeble wretch he seemed, of sallow hue :
 Certes, who bides his grasp, will that encounter rue.

XXIII

For whomsoe'er the villain takes in hand,
 Their joints unknit, their sinews melt apace ;
 As lithe they grow as any willow-wand,
 And of their vanished force remains no trace :
 So when a maiden fair, of modest grace,
 In all her buxom blooming May of charms,
 Is seized in some losel's hot embrace,
 She waxeth very weakly as she warms,
 Then sighing yields her up to love's delicious harms.

XXIV

Waked by the crowd, slow from his bench arose
 A comely, full-spread porter, swoln with sleep :
 His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breathed repose ;
 And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep,
 Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep ;
 While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran,
 Through which his half-waked soul would faintly
 peep ;
 Then, taking his black staff, he called his man,
 And roused himself as much as rouse himself he can.

xxv

The lad leaped lightly at his master's call :
He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
Save sleep and play who minded nought at all,
Like most the untaught striplings of his age.
This boy he kept each band to disengage,
Garters and buckles, task for him unfit,
But ill becoming his grave personage,
And which his portly paunch would not permit ;
So this same limber page to all performèd it.

xxvi

Meantime the master-porter wide displayed
Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns,
Wherewith he those who entered in arrayed,
Loose as the breeze that plays along the downs,
And waves the summer woods when evening frowns.
Oh fair undress, best dress ! it checks no vein,
But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns,
And heightens ease with grace. This done, right fain,
Sir porter sat him down, and turned to sleep again.

xxvii

Thus easy-robed, they to the fountain sped,
That in the middle of the court up-threw
A stream, high spouting from its liquid bed,
And falling back again in drizzy dew :
There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted, drew ;
It was a fountain of nepenthe rare ;
Whence, as Dan Homer sings, huge pleasaunce grew,
And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care ;
Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams
more fair.

xxviii

This rite performed, all inly pleased and still,
Withouten tromp, was proclamation made :

' Ye sons of indolence, do what you will,
 And wander where you list, through hall or glade ;
 Be no man's pleasure for another stayed ;
 Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
 And cursed be he who minds his neighbour's trade.
 Here dwells kind ease and unreproving joy :
 He little merits bliss who others can annoy.'

XXIX

Straight of these endless numbers, swarming round
 As thick as idle motes in sunny ray,
 Not one eftsoons in view was to be found ;
 But every man strolled off his own glad way.
 Wide o'er this ample court's blank area,
 With all the lodges that thereto pertained,
 No living creature could be seen to stray ;
 While solitude and perfect silence reigned,
 So that to think you dreamt you almost was constrained.

XXX

As when a shepherd of the Hebrid-Isles,
 Placed far amid the melancholy main,
 (Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles,
 Or that aërial beings sometimes deign
 To stand, embodied, to our senses plain)
 Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
 The whilst in ocean Phœbus dips his wain,
 A vast assembly moving to and fro ;
 Then, all at once, in air dissolves the wondrous show.

XXXI

Ye gods of quiet, and of sleep profound !
 Whose soft dominion o'er this castle sways,
 And all the widely silent places round,
 Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
 What never yet was sung in mortal lays.

But how shall I attempt such arduous string ?
I, who have spent my nights and nightly days
In this soul-deadening place, loose-loitering :
Ah ! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing ?

XXXII

Come on, my muse, nor stoop to low despair,
Thou imp of Jove, touched by celestial fire ;
Thou yet shalt sing of war, and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of Britain will inspire ;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre ;
Thou yet shalt tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage,
Dashing corruption down though every worthless age.

XXXIII

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
Ne cursèd knocker plied by villain's hand,
Self-opened into halls, where, who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand,
The pride of Turkey and of Persia land ?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread ;
And couches stretch around in seemly band ;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head ;
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed.

XXXIV

And everywhere huge covered tables stood,
With wines high-flavoured and rich viands crowned ;
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old ocean genders in his round :
Some hand unseen these silently displayed,
Even undemanded by a sign or sound ;
You need but wish, and, instantly obeyed,
Fair-ranged the dishes rose, and thick the glasses
played.

XXXV

Here freedom reigned without the least alloy ;
 Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
 Nor saintly spleen durst murmur at our joy,
 And, with envenomed tongue, our pleasures pall.
 For why ? there was but one great rule for all,
 To wit, that each should work his own desire,
 And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
 Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
 And carol what, unbid, the muses might inspire.

XXXVI

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
 Where was inwoven many a gentle tale,
 Such as of old the rural poets sung,
 Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale :
 Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
 Poured forth at large the sweetly tortured heart ;
 Or, looking tender passion, swelled the gale,
 And taught charmed echo to resound their smart ;
 While flocks, woods, streams around, repose and peace
 impart.

XXXVII

Those pleased the most, where, by a cunning hand,
 Depainted was the patriarchal age ;
 What time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,
 And pastured on from verdant stage to stage,
 Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
 Toil was not then ; of nothing took they heed,
 But with wild beasts the silvan war to wage,
 And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed :
 Blessed sons of nature they, true golden age indeed !

XXXVIII

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
 Bade the gay bloom of vernal landscapes rise,

Or Autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls.
 Now the black tempest strikes the astonished eyes ;
 Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies ;
 The trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
 And now rude mountains frown amid the skies ;
 Whate'er Lorraine light-touched with softening hue,
 Or savage Rosa dashed, or learned Poussin drew.

XXXIX

Each sound too here, to languishment inclined,
 Lulled the weak bosom, and inducèd ease.
 Aërial music in the warbling wind,
 At distance rising oft, by small degrees,
 Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
 It hung, and breathed such soul-dissolving airs,
 As did, alas ! with soft perdition please :
 Entangled deep in its enchanting snares,
 The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

XL

A certain music, never known before,
 Here lulled the pensive melancholy mind,
 Full easily obtained. Behoves no more,
 But sidelong, to the gently waving wind,
 To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined ;
 From which, with airy flying fingers light,
 Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,
 The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight :
 Whence, with just cause, the harp of Æolus it hight.

XLI

Ah me ! what hand can touch the string so fine,
 Who up the lofty diapason roll
 Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
 Then let them down again into the soul ?
 Now rising love they fanned ; now pleasing dole

They breathed, in tender musings, thro' the heart ;
 And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
 As when seraphic hands a hymn impart :
 Wild warbling nature all ; above the reach of art !

XLII

Such the gay splendour, the luxurious state,
 Of Caliphs old, who on the Tigris' shore,
 In mighty Bagdat, populous and great,
 Held their bright court, where was of ladies store ;
 And verse, love, music, still the garland wore :
 When sleep was coy, the bard, in waiting there,
 Cheered the lone midnight with the muse's lore ;
 Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
 And music leant new gladness to the morning air.

XLIII

Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran
 Soft tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,
 And sobbing breezes sighed, and oft began
 (So worked the wizard) wintry storms to swell,
 As heaven and earth they would together mell :
 At doors and windows, threatening, seemed to call
 The demons of the tempest, growling fell,
 Yet the least entrance found they none at all ;
 Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.

XLIV

And hither Morpheus sent his kindest dreams,
 Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace ;
 O'er which were shadowy cast elysian gleams,
 That played, in waving lights, from place to place,
 And shed a roseate smile on nature's face.
 Not Titian's pencil e'er could so array,
 So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space ;
 Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,
 As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

XLV

No, fair illusions, artful phantoms, no !
 My muse will not attempt your fairy land ;
 She has no colours that like you can glow ;
 To catch your vivid scenes too gross her hand.
 But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band
 Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprites,
 Who thus in dreams, voluptuous, soft, and bland,
 Poured all the Arabian heaven upon our nights,
 And blessed them oft besides with more refined delights.

XLVI

They were, in sooth, a most enchanting train,
 Even feigning virtue ; skilful to unite
 With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.
 But for those fiends, whom blood and broils delight ;
 Who hurl the wretch, as if to hell outright,
 Down, down black gulfs, where sullen waters sleep,
 Or hold him clambering all the fearful night
 On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep ;
 They, till due time should serve, were bid far hence to
 keep.

XLVII

Ye guardian spirits, to whom man is dear,
 From these foul demons shield the midnight gloom :
 Angels of fancy and of love, be near,
 And o'er the blank of sleep diffuse a bloom :
 Evoke the sacred shades of Greece and Rome,
 And let them virtue with a look impart :
 But chief, awhile, oh ! lend us from the tomb
 Those long lost friends for whom in love we smart,
 And fill with pious awe and joy-mixed woe the heart.

XLVIII

Or are you sportive—Bid the morn of youth
 Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days

Of innocence, simplicity, and truth ;
 To cares estranged, and manhood's thorny ways :
 What transport, to retrace our boyish plays,
 Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied ;
 The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
 Of the wild brooks !—but, fondly wandering wide,
 My muse, resume the task that yet doth thee abide.

XLIX

One great amusement of our household was
 In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,
 Still as you turned it, all things that do pass
 Upon this ant-hill earth ; where constantly
 Of idly busy men the restless fry
 Run bustling to and fro with foolish haste,
 In search of pleasures vain that from them fly,
 Or which, obtained, the caitiffs dare not taste :
 When nothing is enjoyed, can there be greater waste ?

L

'Of vanity the mirror', this was called.
 Here, you a muckworm of the town might see
 At his dull desk, amid his ledgers stalled,
 Eat up with carking care and penury ;
 Most like to carcase parched on gallow-tree.
 'A penny savèd is a penny got'.
 Firm to this scoundrel maxim keepeth he,
 Ne of its rigour will he bate a jot,
 Till it has quenched his fire, and banished his pot.

LI

Straight from the filth of this low grub, behold !
 Comes fluttering forth a gaudy spendthrift heir,
 All glossy gay, enamelled all with gold,
 The silly tenant of the summer air ;
 In folly lost, of nothing takes he care ;

Pimps, lawyers, stewards, harlots, flatterers vile,
And thieving tradesmen him among them share :
His father's ghost, from limbo lake the while,
Sees this, which more damnation doth upon him pile.

LII

This globe pourtrayed the race of learnèd men,
Still at their books, and turning o'er the page,
Backwards and forwards : oft they snatch the pen,
As if inspired, and in a Thespian rage ;
Then write, and blot, as would your ruth engage.
Why, authors, all this scrawl and scribbling sore ?
To lose the present, gain the future age,
Praised to be when you can hear no more,
And much enriched with fame, when useless worldly store.

LIII

Then would a splendid city rise to view,
With carts, and cars, and coaches roaring all :
Wide-poured abroad behold the giddy crew ;
See how they dash along from wall to wall !
At every door, hark how they thundering call !
Good lord ! what can this giddy rout excite ?
Why, on each other with fell tooth to fall ;
A neighbour's fortune, fame, or peace, to blight,
And make new tiresome parties for the coming night.

LIV

The puzzling sons of party next appeared,
In dark cabals and nightly juntos met ;
And now they whispered close, now shrugging reared
The important shoulder ; ther, as if to get
New light, their twinkling eyes were inward set.
No sooner Lucifer recalls affairs,
Than forth they various rush in mighty fret ;
When lo ! pushed up to power, and crowned their
cares,
In comes another set, and kicketh them down stairs,

LV

But what most showed the vanity of life
 Was to behold the nations all on fire,
 In cruel broils engaged, and deadly strife.
 Most christian kings, inflamed by black desire,
 With honourable ruffians in their hire,
 Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour.
 Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
 They sit them down just where they were before ;
 Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force restore.

LVI

To number up the thousands dwelling here,
 An useless were, and eke an endless task ;
 From kings, and those who at the helm appear,
 To gipsies brown in summer-glades who bask.
 Yea many a man, perdie, I could unmask,
 Whose desk and table make a solemn show,
 With tape-tied trash, and suits of fools that ask
 For place or pension, laid in decent row ;
 But these I passen by, with nameless numbers moe.

LVII

Of all the gentle tenants of the place,
 There was a man of special grave remark :
 A certain tender gloom o'erspread his face,
 Pensive, not sad ; in thought involved, not dark ;
 As soot this man could sing as morning lark,
 And teach the noblest morals of the heart :
 But these his talents were yburied stark ;
 Of the fine stores he nothing would impart,
 Which or boon nature gave, or nature painting art.

LVIII

To noontide shades incontinent he ran,
 Where purls the brook with sleep-inviting sound ;

Or, when Dan Sol to slope his wheels began,
 Amid the broom he basked him on the ground,
 Where the wild thyme and camomile are found :
 There would he linger, till the latest ray
 Of light sat trembling on the welkin's bound ;
 Then homeward through the twilight shadows stray,
 Sauntering and slow. So had he passed many a day.

LIX

Yet not in thoughtless slumber were they past :
 For oft the heavenly fire, that lay concealed
 Beneath the sleeping embers, mounted fast,
 And all its native light anew revealed :
 Oft as he traversed the cerulean field,
 And marked the clouds that drove before the wind,
 Ten thousand glorious systems would he build,
 Ten thousand great ideas filled his mind ;
 But with the clouds they fled, and left no tract behind.

LX

With him was sometimes joined, in silent walk,
 (Profoundly silent, for they never spoke)
 One shyer still, who quite detested talk :
 Oft, stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
 To groves of pine, and broad o'ershadowing oak ;
 There, inly thrilled, he wandered all alone,
 And on himself his pensive fury woke,
 Ne ever uttered word, save when first shone
 The glittering star of eve—‘ Thank heaven ! the day
 is done.’

LXI

Here lurked a wretch, who had not crept abroad
 For forty years, ne face of mortal seen ;
 In chamber brooding like a loathly toad ;
 And sure his linen was not very clean.

Through secret loopholes, that had practised been
 Near to his bed, his dinner vile he took ;
 Unkempt and rough, of squalid face and mien,
 Our castle's shame ! whence, from his filthy nook,
 We drove the villain out for fitter lair to look.

LXII

One day there chanced into these halls to rove
 A joyous youth, who took you at first sight ;
 Him the wild wave of pleasure hither drove,
 Before the sprightly tempest tossing light :
 Certes, he was a most engaging wight,
 Of social glee, and wit humane though keen,
 Turning the night to day, and day to night :
 For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
 If, in this nook of quiet, bells had ever been.

LXIII

But not even pleasure to excess is good :
 What most elates, then sinks the soul as low :
 When springtide joy pours in with copious flood,
 The higher still the exulting billows flow,
 The farther back again they flagging go,
 And leave us groveling on the dreary shore :
 Taught by this son of joy, we found it so ;
 Who, whilst he stayèd, kept in gay uproar
 Our maddened castle all, the abode of sleep no more.

LXIV

As when in prime of June a burnished fly,
 Sprung from the meads, o'er which he sweeps along,
 Cheered by the breathing bloom and vital sky,
 Tunes up amid these airy halls his song,
 Soothing at first the gay reposing throng :
 And oft he sips their bowl ; or, nearly drowned,
 He, thence recovering, drives their beds among,
 And scares their tender sleep, with trump profound ;
 Then out again he flies, to wing his mazy round.

LXV

Another guest there was, of sense refined,
 Who felt each worth, for every worth he had ;
 Serene yet warm, humane yet firm his mind,
 As little touched as any man's with bad :
 Him through their inmost walks the muses lad,
 To him the sacred love of nature lent,
 And sometimes would he make our valley glad ;
 When, as we found he would not here be pent,
 To him the better sort this friendly message sent :

LXVI

' Come, dwell with us ! true son of virtue, come !
 But if, alas ! we cannot thee persuade
 To lie content beneath our peaceful dome,
 Ne ever more to quit our quiet glade ;
 Yet when at last thy toils but ill apaid
 Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly spark,
 Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,
 There to indulge the muse, and nature mark :
 We then a lodge for thee will rear in Hagley Park.'

LXVII

Here whilom ligged the Esopus of the age ;
 But, called by fame, in soul yprickèd deep,
 A noble pride restored him to the stage,
 And roused him like a giant from his sleep.
 Even from his slumbers we advantage reap :
 With double force the enlivened scene he wakes,
 Yet quits not nature's bounds. He knows to keep
 Each due decorum : now the heart he shakes,
 And now with well-urged sense the enlightened judg-
 ment takes.

LXVIII

A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems ;
 Who, void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,

On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
 Poured forth his unpremeditated strain :
 The world forsaking with a calm disdain,
 Here laughed he careless in his easy seat ;
 Here quaffed, encircled with the joyous train ;
 Oft-moralizing sage ! his ditty sweet
 He loathèd much to write, ne carèd to repeat.

LXIX

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
 Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy.
 A little, round, fat, oily man of God,
 Was one I chiefly marked among the fry.
 He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
 And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
 If a tight damsel chanced to trippen by ;
 Which when observed, he shrunk into his mew,
 And straight would recollect his piety anew.

LXXX

Nor be forgot a tribe, who minded nought
 (Old inmates of the place) but state-affairs :
 They looked, perdie, as if they deeply thought,
 And on their brow sat every nation's cares.
 The world by them is parcelled out in shares,
 When in the Hall of Smoke they congress hold,
 And the sage berry, sun-burnt Mocha bears,
 Has cleared their inward eye : then, smoke-enrolled,
 Their oracles break forth, mysterious as of old.

LXXI

Here languid Beauty kept her pale-faced court :
 Bevies of dainty dames, of high degree,
 From every quarter hither made resort ;
 Where, from gross mortal care and business free,
 They lay, poured out in ease and luxury.

Or should they a vain show of work assume,
Alas ! and well-a-day ! what can it be ?
To knot, to twist, to 'range the vernal bloom ;
But far is cast the distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom.

LXXII

Their only labour was to kill the time ;
And labour dire it is, and weary woe.
They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme,
Then, rising sudden, to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth, with tottering step and slow.
This soon too rude an exercise they find ;
Straight on the couch their limbs again they throw,
Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclined,
And court the vapoury god, soft breathing in the wind.

LXXIII

Now must I mark the villany we found,
But ah ! too late, as shall eftsoons be shown.
A place here was, deep, dreary, under ground ;
Where still our inmates, when unpleasing grown,
Diseased, and loathsome, privily were thrown.
Far from the light of heaven, they languished there,
Unpitied, uttering many a bitter groan ;
For of these wretches taken was no care ;
Fierce fiends, and hags of hell, their only nurses were.

LXXIV

Alas, the change ! from scenes of joy and rest,
To this dark den, where sickness tossed alway.
Here Lethargy, with deadly sleep oppressed,
Stretched on his back, a mighty lubbard, lay,
Heaving his sides, and snorèd night and day ;
To stir him from his trance it was not eath,
And his half-opened eyne he shut straightway ;
He led, I wot, the softest way to death.
And taught withouten pain and strife to yield the
breath.

LXXV

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsy :
Unwieldy man ; with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply ;
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And moping here did Hypochondria sit,
Mother of spleen, in robes of various dye,
Who vexèd was full oft with ugly fit ;
And some her frantic deemed, and some her deemed a
wit.

LXXVI

A lady proud she was, of ancient blood,
Yet oft her fear her pride made crouchen low :
She felt, or fancied in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spittles know,
And sought all physic which the shops bestow,
And still new leeches and new drugs would try,
Her humour ever wavering to and fro :
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes cry,
Then sudden waxèd wroth, and all she knew not why.

LXXVII

Fast by her side a listless maiden pined,
With aching head, and squeamish heart-burnings ;
Pale, bloated, cold, she seemed to hate mankind,
Yet loved in secret all forbidden things.
And here the Tertian shakes his chilling wings ;
The sleepless Gout here counts the crowing cocks,
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings ;
Whilst Apoplexy crammed Intemperance knocks
Down to the ground at once, as butcher felleth ox.

CANTO II

The Knight of Arts and Industry,
 And his achievements fair ;
 That, by this Castle's overthrow,
 Secured, and crownèd were.

I

ESCAPED the castle of the sire of sin,
 Ah ! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find ?
 For all around, without, and all within,
 Nothing save what delightful was and kind,
 Of goodness savouring and a tender mind,
 E'er rose to view. But now another strain,
 Of doleful note, alas ! remains behind :
 I now must sing of pleasure turned to pain,
 And of the false enchanter Indolence complain.

II

Is there no patron to protect the muse,
 And fence for her Parnassus' barren soil ?
 To every labour its reward accrues,
 And they are sure of bread who swink and moil ;
 But a fell tribe the Aonian hive despoil,
 As ruthless wasps oft rob the painful bee :
 Thus while the laws not guard that noblest toil,
 Ne for the Muses other meed decree,
 They praisèd are alone, and starve right merrily.

III

I care not, fortune, what you me deny :
 You cannot rob me of free nature's grace ;
 You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
 Through which Aurora shows her brightening face ;
 You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
 The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve

Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
 And I their toys to the great children leave :
 Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

IV

Come then, my muse, and raise a bolder song ;
 Come, lig no more upon the bed of sloth,
 Dragging the lazy languid line along,
 Fond to begin, but still to finish loath,
 Thy half-writ scrolls all eaten by the moth :
 Arise, and sing that generous imp of fame,
 Who with the sons of softness nobly wroth,
 To sweep away this human lumber came,
 Or in a chosen few to rouse the slumbering flame.

V

In fairy-land there lived a knight of old,
 Of feature stern, Selvaggio well ycleped,
 A rough unpolished man, robust and bold,
 But wondrous poor : he neither sowed nor reaped,
 Ne stores in summer for cold winter heaped ;
 In hunting all his days away he wore ;
 Now scorched by June, now in November steeped,
 Now pinched by biting January sore,
 He still in woods pursued the libbard and the boar.

VI

As he one morning, long before the dawn,
 Pricked through the forest to dislodge his prey,
 Deep in the winding bosom of a lawn,
 With wood wild-fringed, he marked a taper's ray,
 That from the beating rain, and wintry fray,
 Did to a lonely cot his steps decoy ;
 There, up to earn the needments of the day,
 He found dame Poverty, nor fair nor coy :
 Her he compressed, and filled her with a lusty boy.

VII

Amid the greenwood shade this boy was bred,
And grew at last a knight of muchel fame,
Of active mind and vigorous lustyhead,
The Knight of Arts and Industry by name :
Earth was his bed, the boughs his roof did frame ;
He knew no beverage but the flowing stream ;
His tasteful well earned food the sylvan game,
Or the brown fruit with which the woodlands teem :
The same to him glad summer, or the winter breme.

VIII

So passed his youthly morning, void of care,
Wild as the colts that through the commons run :
For him no tender parents troubled were,
He of the forest seemed to be the son ;
And, certes, had been utterly undone,
But that Minerva pity of him took,
With all the gods that love the rural wonne,
That teach to tame the soil and rule the crook ;
Ne did the sacred Nine disdain a gentle look.

IX

Of fertile genius him they nurtured well,
In every science, and in every art,
By which mankind the thoughtless brutes excel,
That can or use, or joy, or grace impart,
Disclosing all the powers of head and heart :
Ne were the goodly exercises spared,
That brace the nerves, or make the limbs alert.
And mix elastic force with firmness hard :
Was never knight on ground mote be with him
compared.

X

Sometimes, with early morn, he mounted gay
The hunter-steed, exulting o'er the dale,

And drew the roseate breath of orient day ;
 Sometimes, retiring to the secret vale,
 Yclad in steel, and bright with burnished mail,
 He strained the bow, or tossed the sounding spear,
 Or darting on the goal, outstripped the gale,
 Or wheeled the chariot in its mid career,
 Or, strenuous, wrestled hard with many a tough
 compeer.

XI

At other times he pried through nature's store,
 Whate'er she in the ethereal round contains ;
 Whate'er she hides beneath her verdant floor ;
 The vegetable and the mineral reigns.
 Or else he scanned the globe, those small domains
 Where restless mortals such a turmoil keep,
 Its seas, its floods, its mountains, and its plains ;
 But more he searched the mind, and roused from
 sleep
 Those moral seeds whence we heroic actions reap.

XII

Nor would he scorn to stoop from high pursuits
 Of heavenly truth, and practise what she taught.
 Vain is the tree of knowledge without fruits.
 Sometimes in hand the spade or plough he caught,
 Forth calling all with which boon earth is fraught ;
 Sometimes he plied the strong mechanic tool,
 Or reared the fabric from the finest draught ;
 And oft he put himself to Neptune's school,
 Fighting with winds and waves on the vexed ocean
 pool.

XIII

To solace then these rougher toils, he tried
 To touch the kindling canvass into life ;
 With nature his creating pencil vied,

With nature joyous at the mimic strife ;
 Or, to such shapes as graced Pygmalion's wife,
 He hewed the marble ; or, with varied fire,
 He roused the trumpet and the martial fife ;
 Or bade the lute sweet tenderness inspire ;
 Or verses framed that well might wake Apollo's lyre.

XIV

Accomplished thus, he from the woods issued,
 Full of great aims, and bent on bold emprise ;
 The work, which long he in his breast had brewed,
 Now to perform he ardent did devise ;
 To wit, a barbarous world to civilize.
 Earth was till then a boundless forest wild ;
 Nought to be seen but savage wood and skies ;
 No cities nourished arts, no culture smiled,
 No government, no laws, no gentle manners mild.

XV

A rugged wight, the worst of brutes, was man ;
 On his own wretched kind he, ruthless, preyed :
 The strongest still the weakest over-ran ;
 In every country mighty robbers swayed,
 And guile and ruffian force were all their trade.
 Life was a scene of rapine, want, and woe ;
 Which this brave knight, in noble anger, made
 To swear he would the rascal rout o'erthrew ;
 For, by the powers divine, it should no more be so !

XVI

It would exceed the purport of my song
 To say how this best sun, from orient climes,
 Came beaming life and beauty all along ;
 Before him chasing indolence and crimes.
 Still as he passed, the nations he sublimes,

And calls forth arts and virtue with his ray :
 Then Egypt, Greece, and Rome their golden times,
 Successive, had ; but now in ruins grey
 They lie, to slavish sloth and tyranny a prey.

XVII

To crown his toils, Sir Industry then spread
 The swelling sail, and made for Britain's coast.
 A sylvan life till then the natives led,
 In the brown shades and greenwood forest lost,
 All careless, rambling where it liked them most :
 Their wealth the wild deer bouncing through the
 glade ;
 They lodged at large, and lived at nature's cost ;
 Save spear and bow, withouten other aid ;
 Yet not the Roman steel their naked breast dismayed.

XVIII

He liked the soil, he liked the clement skies,
 He liked the verdant hills and flowery plains :
 ' Be this my great, my chosen isle,' (he cries)
 ' This, whilst my labours liberty sustains,
 This queen of ocean all assault disdains.'
 Nor liked he less the genius of the land,
 To freedom apt and persevering pains,
 Mild to obey, and generous to command,
 Tempered by forming heaven with kindest firmest
 hand.

XIX

Here, by degrees, his master-work arose,
 Whatever arts and industry can frame :
 Whatever finished agriculture knows,
 Fair queen of arts ! from heaven itself who came,
 When Eden flourished in unspotted fame ;
 And still with her sweet innocence we find,

And tender peace, and joys without a name,
 That, while they rapture, tranquillize the mind :
 Nature and art at once ; delight and use combined.

XX

Then towns he quickened by mechanic arts,
 And bade the fervent city glow with toil ;
 Bade social commerce raise renownèd marts,
 Join land to land, and marry soil to soil ;
 Unite the poles, and, without bloody spoil,
 Bring home of either Ind the gorgeous stores ;
 Or, should despotic rage the world embroil,
 Bade tyrants tremble on remotest shores,
 While o'er the encircling deep Britannia's thunder roars.

XXI

The drooping muses then he westward called,
 From the famed city by Propontick sea,
 What time the Turk the enfeebled Grecian thralled ;
 Thence from their cloistered walks he set them free,
 And brought them to another Castalie,
 Where Isis many a famous nursling breeds ;
 Or where old Cam soft-paces o'er the lea
 In pensive mood, and tunes his Doric reeds,
 The whilst his flocks at large the lonely shepherd feeds.

XXII

Yet the fine arts were what he finished least.
 For why ? They are the quintessence of all,
 The growth of labouring time, and slow increased ;
 Unless, as seldom chances, it should fall
 That mighty patrons the coy sisters call
 Up to the sunshine of uncumbered ease,
 Where no rude care the mounting thought may thrall,
 And where they nothing have to do but please :
 Ah ! gracious God ! thou know'st they ask no other fees.

XXIII

But now, alas ! we live too late in time :
 Our patrons now even grudge that little claim,
 Except to such as sleek the soothing rhyme ;
 And yet, forsooth, they wear Mæcenas' name,
 Poor sons of puffed-up vanity, not fame.
 Unbroken spirits, cheer ! still, still remains
 The eternal patron, liberty ; whose flame,
 While she protects, inspires the noblest strains :
 The best and sweetest far, are toil-created gains.

XXIV

When as the knight had framed, in Britain-land,
 A matchless form of glorious government,
 In which the sovereign laws alone command,
 Laws 'established by the public free consent,
 Whose majesty is to the sceptre lent ;
 When this great plan, with each dependent art,
 Was settled firm, and to his heart's content,
 Then sought he from the toilsome scene to part,
 And let life's vacant eve breathe quiet through the
 heart.

XXV

For this he chose a farm in Deva's vale,
 Where his long alleys peeped upon the main.
 In this calm seat he drew the healthful gale,
 Here mixed the chief, the patriot, and the swain.
 The happy monarch of his sylvan train,
 Here, sided by the guardians of the fold,
 He walked his rounds, and cheered his blest domain :
 His days, the days of unstained nature, rolled
 Replete with peace and joy, like patriarch's of old.

XXVI

Witness, ye lowing herds, who gave him milk ;
 Witness, ye flocks, whose woolly vestments far

Exceed soft India's cotton, or her silk ;
 Witness, with Autumn charged, the nodding car,
 That homeward came beneath sweet evening's star,
 Or of September-moons the radiance mild.
 Oh, hide thy head, abominable war !
 Of crimes and ruffian idleness the child !
 From heaven this life ysprung, from hell thy glories
 vild !

I

XXVII

Nor from his deep retirement banished was
 The amusing care of rural industry.
 Still, as with grateful change the seasons pass,
 New scenes arise, new landscapes strike the eye,
 And all the enlivened country beautify.
 Gay plains extend where marshes slept before ;
 O'er recent meads the exulting streamlets fly ;
 Dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres' store,
 And woods imbrown the steep, or wave along the shore.

XXVIII

As nearer to his farm you made approach,
 He polished nature with a finer hand :
 Yet on her beauties durst not art encroach ;
 'Tis art's alone these beauties to expand.
 In graceful dance immingled, o'er the land,
 Pan, Pales, Flora, and Pomona played :
 Here too brisk gales the rude wild common fand
 A happy place ; where, free and unafraid,
 Amid the flowering brakes each coyer creature strayed.

XXIX

But in prime vigour what can last for aye ?
 That soul-enfeebling wizard, Indolence,
 I whilom sung, wrought in his works decay :
 Spread far and wide was his cursed influence ;

Of public virtue much he dulled the sense,
 Even much of private ; eat our spirit out,
 And fed our rank luxurious vices : whence
 The land was overlaid with many a lout ;
 Not, as old fame reports, wise, generous, bold, and stout.

XXX

A rage of pleasure maddened every breast,
 Down to the lowest lees the ferment ran :
 To his licentious wish each must be blessed,
 With joy be fevered ; snatch it as he can.
 Thus vice the standard reared ; her arrier-ban
 Corruption called, and loud she gave the word.
 ‘ Mind, mind yourselves ! why should the vulgar man,
 The lackey, be more virtuous than his lord ?
 Enjoy this span of life ! ’tis all the gods afford.’

XXXI

The tidings reached to where, in quiet hall,
 The good old knight enjoyed well earned repose :
 ‘ Come, come, Sir Knight ! thy children on thee call ;
 Come, save us yet, ere ruin round us close !
 The demon Indolence thy toils o’erthrows.’
 On this the noble colour stained his cheeks,
 Indignant, glowing through the whitening snows
 Of venerable eld ; his eye full-speaks
 His ardent soul, and from his couch at once he breaks.

XXXII

‘ I will ’, (he cried) ‘ so help me, God ! destroy
 That villain Archimage.’—His page then straight
 He to him called ; a fiery-footed boy,
 Benempt Dispatch : ‘ My steed be at the gate ;
 My bard attend ; quick, bring the net of fate.’
 This net was twisted by the sisters three ;

Which, when once cast o'er hardened wretch, too late
 Repentance comes : replevy cannot be
 From the strong iron grasp of vengeful destiny.

XXXIII

He came, the bard, a little Druid wight,
 Of withered aspect ; but his eye was keen,
 With sweetness mixed. In russet brown bedight,
 As is his sister of the copses green,
 He crept alng, unpromising of mien.
 Gross he who judges so. His soul was fair,
 Bright as the children of yon azure sheen.
 True comeliness, which nothing can impair,
 Dwells in the mind : all else is vanity and glare.

XXXIV

' Come ' (quoth the knight), ' a voice has reached
 mine ear ;
 The demon Indolence threatens overthrow
 To all that to mankind is good and dear :
 Come, Philomelus, let us instant go,
 O'ertun his bowers, and lay his castle low.
 Those men, those wretched men, who will be slaves,
 Must drink a bitter wrathful cup of woe :
 But some there be, thy song, as from their graves,
 Shall raise.' Thrice happy he who without rigour saves !

XXXV

Issuing forth, the knight bestrode his steed
 Of ardent bay, and on whose front a star
 Shone blazing bright. Sprung from the generous
 breed
 That whirl of active day the rapid car,
 He pranced along, disdaining gate or bar.
 Meantime the bard on milk-white palfrey rode,
 An honest sober beast, that did not mar
 His meditations, but full softly trode :
 And much they moralized as thus yfere they yode.

XXXVI

They talked of virtue, and of human bliss.
 What else so fit for man to settle well ?
 And still their long researches met in this,
 This truth of truths, which nothing can repel :
 ' From virtue's fount the purest joys outwell,
 Sweet rills of thought that cheer the conscious soul ;
 While vice pours forth the troubled streams of hell,
 The which, howe'er disguised, at last with dole
 Will through the tortured breast their fiery torrent roll.'

XXXVII

At length it dawned, that fatal valley gay,
 O'er which high wood-crowned hills their summits
 rear :
 On the cool height awhile our palmers stay,
 And spite even of themselves their senses cheer ;
 Then to the wizard's wonne their steps they steer.
 Like a green isle, it broad beneath them spread,
 With gardens round, and wandering currents clear,
 And tufted groves to shade the meadow-bed,
 Sweet airs and song ; and without hurry all seemed glad.

XXXVIII

' As God shall judge me, knight, we must forgive '
 (The half-enraptured Philomelus cried)
 ' The frail good man deluded here to live,
 And in these groves his musing fancy hide.
 Ah, nought is pure ! It cannot be denied
 That virtue still some tincture has of vice,
 And vice of virtue. What should then betide,
 But that our charity be not too nice ?
 Come, let us those we can to real bliss entice.'

XXXIX

' Ay, sicker ', (quoth the knight) ' all flesh is frail,
 To pleasant sin and joyous dalliance bent ;

But let not brutish vice of this avail,
 And think to 'scape deservèd punishment.
 Justice were cruel weakly to relent ;
 From mercy's self she got her sacred glaive :
 Grace be to those who can, and will, repent ;
 But penance, long and dreary, to the slave
 Who must in floods of fire his gross foul spirit lave.'

XL

Thus, holding high discourse, they came to where
 The cursèd carle was at his wonted trade ;
 Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
 In witching wise, as I before have said.
 But when he saw, in goodly gear arrayed,
 The grave majestic knight approaching nigh,
 And by his side the bard so sage and staid,
 His countenance fell ; yet oft his anxious eye
 Marked them, like wily fox who roosted cock doth spy.

XLI

Nathless, with feigned respect, he bade give back
 The rabble rout, and welcomed them full kind.
 Struck with the noble twain, they were not slack
 His orders to obey, and fall behind.
 Then he resumed his song ; and, unconfined,
 Poured all his music, ran through all his strings :
 With magic dust their eyne he tries to blind,
 And virtue's tender airs o'er weakness flings.
 What pity base his song who so divinely sings !

XLII

Elate in thought, he counted them his own,
 They listened so intent with fixed delight :
 But they instead, as if transmewed to stone,
 Marvelled he could with such sweet art unite
 The lights and shades of manners, wrong and right.

130285

Meantime, the silly crowd the charm devour,
 Wide pressing to the gate. Swift, on the knight
 He darted fierce, to drag him to his bower,
 Who, backening, shunned his touch, for well he knew
 its power.

XLIII

As in thronged amphitheatre, of old,
 The wary retiarius trapped his foe ;
 Even so the knight, returning on him bold,
 At once involved him in the net of woe,
 Whereof I mention made not long ago.
 Enraged at first, he scorned so weak a jail,
 And leaped, and flew, and flouncèd to and fro ;
 But when he found that nothing could avail,
 He sat him felly down, and gnawed his bitter nail.

XLIV

* Alarmed, the inferior demons of the place
 Raised rueful shrieks and hideous yells around ;
 Black stormy clouds deformed the welkin's face,
 And from beneath was heard a wailing sound,
 As of infernal sprites in cavern bound.
 A solemn sadness every creature strook,
 And lightnings flashed, and horror rocked the ground :
 Huge crowds on crowds outpoured, with blemished
 look,
 As if on time's last verge this frame of things had shook.

XLV

Soon as the short-lived tempest was yspent,
 Steamed from the jaws of vexed Avernus' hole,
 And hushed the hubbub of the rabblement,
 Sir Industry the first calm moment stole :
 ' There must,' (he cried) ' amid so vast a shoal,
 Be some who are not tainted at the heart,
 Not poisoned quite by this same villain's bowl.
 Come then, my bard, thy heavenly fire impart ;
 Touch soul with soul, till forth the latent spirit start.'

XLVI

The bard obeyed ; and taking from his side,
 Where it in seemly sort depending hung,
 His British harp, its speaking strings he tried,
 The which with skilful touch he deftly strung,
 Till tinkling in clear symphony they rung.
 Then, as he felt the muses come along,
 Light o'er the chords his raptured hand he flung,
 And played a prelude to his rising song :
 The whilst, like midnight mute, ten thousands round
 him throng.

XLVII

Thus, ardent, burst his strain.—‘ Ye hapless race,
 Dire labouring here to smother reason’s ray,
 That lights our Maker’s image in our face,
 And gives us wide o'er earth unquestioned sway ;
 What is the adored Supreme Perfection, say ?
 What, but eternal never resting soul,
 Almighty power, and all-directing day ;
 By whom each atom stirs, the planets roll ;
 Who fills, surrounds, informs, and agitates the whole.

XLVIII

Come, to the beaming God your hearts unfold !
 Draw from its fountain life ! ’Tis thence, alone,
 We can excel. Up from unfeeling mould,
 To seraphs burning round the Almighty’s throne,
 Life rising still on life, in higher tone,
 Perfection forms, and with perfection bliss.
 In universal nature this clear shown,
 Not needeth proof : to prove it were, I wis,
 To prove the beauteous world excels the brute abyss.

XLIX

Is not the field, with lively culture green,
 A sight more joyous than the dead morass ?

Do not the skies, with active ether clean,
 And fanned by sprightly zephyrs, far surpass
 The foul November fogs, and slumbrous mass
 With which sad nature veils her drooping face ?
 Does not the mountain stream, as clear as glass,
 Gay-dancing on, the putrid pool disgrace ?
 The same in all holds true, but chief in human race.

L

It was not by vile loitering in ease
 That Greece obtained the brighter palm of art ;
 That soft yet ardent Athens learned to please,
 To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart :
 In all supreme ! complete in every part !
 It was not thence majestic Rome arose,
 And o'er the nations shook her conquering dart :
 For sluggard's brow the laurel never grows ;
 Renown is not the child of indolent repose.

LI

Had unambitious mortals minded nought,
 But in loose joy their time to wear away ;
 Had they alone the lap of dalliance sought,
 Pleased on her pillow their dull heads to lay,
 Rude nature's state had been our state to-day ;
 No cities e'er their towery fronts had raised,
 No arts had made us opulent and gay ;
 With brother brutes the human race had grazed ;
 None e'er had soared to fame, none honoured been, none
 praised.

LII

Great Homer's song had never fired the breast
 To thirst of glory and heroic deeds ;
 Sweet Maro's muse, sunk in inglorious rest,
 Had silent slept amid the Mincian reeds ;

The wits of modern time had told their beads,
The monkish legends been their only strains ;
Our Milton's Eden had lain wrapped in weeds,
Our Shakespeare strolled and laughed with Warwick
swains,
Ne had my master Spenser charmed his Mulla's plains.

LIII

Dumb too had been the sage historic muse,
And perished all the sons of ancient fame ;
Those starry lights of virtue, that diffuse
Through the dark depth of time their vivid flame,
Had all been lost, with such as have no name.
Who then had scorned his ease for others' good ?
Who then had toiled rapacious men to tame ?
Who in the public breach devoted stood,
And for his country's cause been prodigal of blood ?

LIV

But should to fame your hearts unfailing be,
If right I read, you pleasure all require :
Then hear how best may be obtained this fee,
How best enjoyed this nature's wide desire.
Toil and be glad ! let industry inspire
Into your quickened limbs her buoyant breath !
Who does not act is dead ; absorbed entire
In miry sloth, no pride, no joy he hath :
Oh leaden-hearted men, to be in love with death !

LV

Ah ! what avail the largest gifts of heaven,
When drooping health and spirits go amiss ?
How tasteless then whatever can be given !
Health is the vital principle of bliss,
And exercise of health. In proof of this
Behold the wretch who slugs his life away,

Soon swallowed in disease's sad abyss ;
 While he whom toil has braced, or manly play,
 Has light as air each limb, each thought as clear as day.

LVI

Oh, who can speak the vigorous joys of health !
 Unclogged the body, unobscured the mind :
 The morning rises gay, with pleasing stealth,
 The temperate evening falls serene and kind.
 In health the wiser brutes true gladness find :
 See, how the younglings frisk along the meads,
 As May comes on and wakes the balmy wind ;
 Rampant with life, their joy all joy exceeds :
 Yet what save high-strung health this dancing pleasure breeds ?

LVII

But here, instead, is fostered every ill,
 Which or distempered minds or bodies know.
 Come then, my kindred spirits ! do not spill
 Your talents here : this place is but a show,
 Whose charms delude you to the den of woe.
 Come, follow me, I will direct you right,
 Where pleasure's roses, void of serpents, grow,
 Sincere as sweet ; come, follow this good knight,
 And you will bless the day that brought him to your sight.

LVIII

Some he will lead to courts, and some to camps ;
 To senates some, and public sage debates,
 Where, by the solemn gleam of midnight lamps,
 The world is poised, and managed mighty states ;
 To high discovery some, that new creates
 The face of earth ; some to the thriving mart ;
 Some to the rural reign, and softer fates ;
 To the sweet muses some, who raise the heart :
 All glory shall be yours, all nature, and all art.

LIX

There are, I see, who listen to my lay,
 Who, wretched, sigh for virtue, but despair :
 " All may be done," (methinks I hear them say)
 " Even death despised by generous actions fair ;
 All, but for those who to these bowers repair,
 Their every power dissolved in luxury,
 To quit of torpid sluggishness the lair,
 And from the powerful arms of sloth get free :
 'Tis rising from the dead. Alas ! It cannot be ! "

LX

Would you then learn to dissipate the band
 Of these huge threatening difficulties dire,
 That in the weak man's way like lions stand,
 His soul appal, and damp his rising fire ?
 Resolve, resolve, and to be men aspire.
 Exert that noblest privilege, alone,
 Here to mankind indulged ; control desire :
 Let godlike reason, from her sovereign throne,
 Speak the commanding word " I will ! " and it is done.

LXI

Heavens ! can you then thus waste, in shameful wise,
 Your few important days of trial here ?
 Heirs of eternity ! yborn to rise
 Through endless states of being, still more near
 To bliss approaching, and perfection clear ;
 Can you renounce a fortune so sublime,
 Such glorious hopes, your backward steps to steer,
 And roll, with vilest brutes, through mud and slime ?
 No ! no ! — Your heaven-touched hearts disdain the
 piteous crime ! '

LXII

' Enough ! enough ! ' they cried. Straight, from the
 crowd,
 The better sort on wings of transport fly :

As when, amid the lifeless summits proud
 Of Alpine cliffs, where, to the gelid sky,
 Snows piled on snows in wintry torpor lie,
 The rays divine of vernal Phœbus play ;
 The awakened heaps, in streamlets from on high,
 Roused into action, lively leap away,
 Glad warbling through the vales, in their new being gay.

LXIII

Not less the life, the vivid joy serene,
 That lighted up these new created men,
 Than that which wings the exulting spirit clean,
 When, just delivered from this fleshly den,
 It soaring seeks its native skies again :
 How light its essence ! how unclogged its powers !
 Beyond the blazon of my mortal pen :
 Even so we glad forsook these sinful bowers ;
 Even such enraptured life, such energy was ours.

LXIV

But far the greater part, with rage inflamed,
 Dire muttered curses, and blasphemed high Jove :
 ' Ye sons of hate ! ' (they bitterly exclaimed)
 ' What brought you to this seat of peace and love ?
 While with kind nature, here amid the grove,
 We passed the harmless sabbath of our time,
 What to disturb it could, fell men, emove
 Your barbarous hearts ? Is happiness a crime ?
 Then do the fiends of hell rule in yon heaven sublime.'

LXV

' Ye impious wretches ', (quoth the knight in wrath),
 ' Your happiness behold ! ' Then straight a wand
 He waved, an anti-magic power that hath
 Truth from illusive falsehood to command.
 Sudden the landscape sinks on every hand ;

The pure quick streams are marshy puddles found ;
On baleful heaths the groves all blackened stand ;
And, o'er the weedy foul abhorred ground,
Snakes, adders, toads, each loathsome creature crawls
around.

LXVI

And here and there, on trees by lightning scathed,
Unhappy wights who loathèd life yhung ;
Or, in fresh gore and recent murder bathed,
They weltering lay ; or else, infuriate flung
Into the gloomy flood, while ravens sung
The funeral dirge, they down the torrent rolled :
These, by distempered blood to madness stung,
Had doomed themselves ; whence oft, when night
controlled
The world, returning hither their sad spirits howled.

LXVII

Meantime a moving scene was open laid :
That lazár-house, I whilom in my lay
Depainted have, its horrors deep displayed,
And gave unnumbered wretches to the day,
Who tossing there in squalid misery lay.
Soon as of sacred light the unwonted smile
Poured on these living catacombs its ray,
Through the drear caverns stretching many a mile,
The sick upraised their heads, and dropped their woes
awhile.

LXVIII

‘ Oh heaven ! ’ (they cried) ‘ and do we once more see
Yon blessed sun, and this green earth so fair ?
Are we from noisome damps of pesthouse free,
And drink our souls the sweet ethereal air ?

Oh thou ! or knight, or god, who holdest there
 That fiend, oh, keep him in eternal chains !
 But what for us, the children of despair,
 Brought to the brink of hell, what hope remains ?
 Repentance does itself but aggravate our pains.'

LXIX

The gentle knight, who saw their rueful case,
 Let fall adown his silver beard some tears.
 ' Certes ' (quoth he) ' it is not even in grace
 To undo the past, and eke your broken years :
 Nathless, to nobler worlds repentance rears,
 With humble hope, her eye ; to her is given
 A power the truly contrite heart that cheers ;
 She quells the brand by which the rocks are riven :
 She more than merely softens, she rejoices heaven.

LXX

Then patient bear the sufferings you have earned,
 And by these sufferings purify the mind ;
 Let wisdom be by past misconduct learned :
 Or pious die, with penitence resigned ;
 And to a life more happy and refined,
 Doubt not, you shall, new creatures, yet arise.
 Till then, you may expect in me to find
 One who will wipe your sorrow from your eyes,
 One who will soothe your pangs, and wing you to the
 skies.'

LXXI

They silent heard, and poured their thanks in tears :
 ' For you ' (resumed the knight in sterner tone)
 ' Whose hard dry hearts the obdurate demon sears,
 That villain's gifts will cost you many a groan ;
 In dolorous mansion long you must bemoan
 His fatal charms, and weep your stains away ;

Till, soft and pure as infant goodness grown,
 You feel a perfect change : then, who can say
 What grace may yet shine forth in heaven's eternal
 day ? '

LXXII

This said, his powerful wand he waved anew :
 Instant, a glorious angel-train descends,
 The charities, to wit, of rosy hue.
 Sweet love their looks a gentle radiance lends,
 And with seraphic flame compassion blends.
 At once, delighted, to their charge they fly :
 When lo ! a goodly hospital ascends,
 In which they bade each human aid be nigh,
 That could the sick-bed smooth of that sad company,

LXXIII

It was a worthy, edifying sight,
 And gives to human kind peculiar grace,
 To see kind hands attending day and night,
 With tender ministry, from place to place.
 Some prop the head ; some, from the pallid face,
 Wipe off the faint cold dews weak nature sheds ;
 Some reach the healing draught : the whilst, to chase
 The fear supreme, around their softened beds,
 Some holy man, by prayer, all-opening heaven dispreads.

LXXIV

Attended by a glad acclaiming train
 Of those he rescued had from gaping hell,
 Then turned the knight ; and, to his hall again
 Soft-pacing, sought of peace the mossy cell.
 Yet down his cheeks the gems of pity fell,
 To see the helpless wretches that remained,
 There left through delves and deserts dire to yell ;
 Amazed, their looks with pale dismay were stained,
 And, spreading wide their hands, they meek repentance
 feigned.

LXXV

But ah ! their scornèd day of grace was past :
 For (horrible to tell !) a desert wild
 Before them stretched, bare, comfortless, and vast ;
 With gibbets, bones, and carcases defiled.
 There nor trim field, nor lively culture smiled ;
 Nor waving shade was seen, nor fountain fair ;
 But sands abrupt on sands lay loosely piled,
 Through which they floundering toiled with painful
 care,
 Whilst Phœbus smote them sore, and fired the cloudless
 air.

LXXVI

Then, varying to a joyless land of bogs,
 The saddened country a gray waste appeared,
 Where nought but putrid streams and noisome fogs
 For ever hung on drizzly Auster's beard ;
 Or else the ground, by piercing Caurus seared,
 Was jagged with frost, or heaped with glazed snow :
 Through these extremes a ceaseless round they
 steered,
 By cruel fiends still hurried to and fro,
 Gaunt beggary and scorn, with many hell-hounds moe.

LXXVII

The first was with base dunghill rags yclad,
 Tainting the gale, in which they fluttered light ;
 Of morbid hue his features, sunk and sad ;
 His hollow eyne shook forth a sickly light ;
 And o'er his lank jawbone, in piteous plight,
 His black rough beard was matted rank and vile ;
 Direful to see ! a heart-appalling sight !
 Meantime foul scurf and blotches him defile ;
 And dogs, where'er he went, still barkèd all the while.

LXXVIII

The other was a fell despiteful fiend ;
Hell holds none worse in baleful bower below :
By pride, and wit, and rage, and rancour keened ;
Of man alike, if good or bad, the foe :
With nose upturned, he always made a show
As if he smelt some nauseous scent ; his eye
Was cold and keen, like blast from boreal snow :
And taunts he casten forth most bitterly.
Such were the twain that off-drove this ungodly fry.

LXXIX

Even so through Brentford town, a town of mud,
A herd of bristly swine is pricked along ;
The filthy beasts, that never chew the cud,
Still grunt, and squeak, and sing their troublous song ;
And oft they plunge themselves the mire among ;
But aye the ruthless driver goads them on,
And aye of barking dogs the bitter throng
Makes them renew their unmelodious moan,
Ne ever find they rest from their unresting fone.

THOMSON'S EXPLANATION OF OBSOLETE
WORDS USED IN THE POEM

<i>Apaid</i> , paid	<i>Libbard</i> , leopard
<i>Appal</i> , affright	<i>Lig</i> , to lie
<i>Archimage</i> , the chief or greatest of magicians or enchanters	<i>Lithe</i> , loose, lax
<i>Atween</i> , between	<i>Losel</i> , a loose, idle fellow
<i>Ay</i> , always	<i>Louting</i> , bowing, bending
<i>Bale</i> , sorrow, trouble, misfortune	<i>Mell</i> , mingle
<i>Benempt</i> , named	<i>Moe</i> , more
<i>Blazon</i> , painting, displaying	<i>Moil</i> , to labour
<i>Breme</i> , cold, raw	<i>Mote</i> , might
<i>Carol</i> , to sing songs of joy	<i>Muchel</i> , or <i>mochel</i> , much, great
<i>Caurus</i> , the north-east wind	<i>Nathless</i> , nevertheless
<i>Certes</i> , certainly	<i>Ne</i> , nor
<i>Dan</i> , a word prefixed to names	<i>Needments</i> , necessities
<i>Deftly</i> , skilfully	<i>Noursling</i> , a child that is nursed
<i>Depainted</i> , painted	<i>Noyance</i> , harm
<i>Drowsy-head</i> , drowsiness	<i>Prankt</i> , coloured, adorned gaily
<i>Eath</i> , easy	<i>Perdie</i> (par Dieu,) an old oath
<i>Eftsoons</i> , immediately, often, afterwards	<i>Pricked through the forest</i> , rode through the forest
<i>Eke</i> , also	<i>Sear</i> , dry, burnt up
<i>Fays</i> , fairies	<i>Sheen</i> , bright, shining
<i>Gear</i> or <i>geer</i> , furniture, equipage, dress	<i>Sicker</i> , sure, surely
<i>Glaive</i> , sword	<i>Smackt</i> , savoured
<i>Glee</i> , joy, pleasure	<i>Soot</i> , sweet, or sweetly
<i>Han</i> , have	<i>Sooth</i> , true or truth
<i>Hight</i> , name, called	<i>Stound</i> , misfortune, pang
<i>Idless</i> , idleness	<i>Sweltry</i> , sultry, consuming with heat
<i>Imp</i> , child or offspring. (from the Saxon <i>impan</i> , to graft or plant)	<i>Swink</i> , to labour
<i>Kest</i> , for cast	<i>Thrall</i> , slave
<i>Lad</i> , for led	<i>Transmewed</i> , transformed
<i>Lea</i> , a piece of land or meadow	<i>Unkempt</i> , (Lat. <i>incomptus</i>), un-adorned
	<i>Vild</i> , vile

EXPLANATION OF OBSOLETE WORDS 51

Ween, to think, be of opinion

Weet, to know, to weet, to wit

Whilom, erewhile, formerly

Wight, man

Wis for *Wist*, to know, think,
understand

Wonne, (a noun,) dwelling

Wroke, wreaked

N.B. The letter *y* is frequently
placed in the beginning of a

word by Spenser to lengthen it
a syllable; and *en* at the end of
a word for the same reason

Yblent or *blent*, blended, mingled

Yborn, born

Yclad, clad

Ycleped, called, named

Yfere, together

Ymolten, melted

Yode, (preter tense of *yede*,) went



LIBERTY : PART I

1

ANCIENT AND MODERN ITALY COMPARED

CONTENTS

THE following poem is thrown into the form of a poetical vision : its scene the ruins of ancient Rome. The Goddess of Liberty, who is supposed to speak through the whole, appears, characterized as British Liberty, to verse 44. Gives a view of ancient Italy, and particularly of Republican Rome, in all her magnificence and glory, to verse 112. This contrasted by modern Italy, its valleys, mountains, culture, cities, people ; the difference appearing strongest in the capital city, Rome, to verse 234. The ruins of the great works of Liberty more magnificent than the borrowed pomp of Oppression ; and from them revived Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture, to verse 256. The old Romans apostrophised, with regard to the several melancholy changes in Italy : Horace, Tully, and Virgil, with regard to their Tibur, Tusculum, and Naples, to verse 287. That once finest and most ornamented part of Italy, all along the coast of Baiae, how changed, to verse 321. This desolation of Italy applied to Britain, to verse 344. Address to the Goddess of Liberty, that she would deduce from the first ages, her chief establishments, the description of which constitutes the subject of the following parts of this poem. She assents, and commands what she says to be sung in Britain ; whose happiness, arising from freedom and a limited monarchy, she marks, to verse 391. An immediate vision attends, and paints her words. Invocation.

O MY lamented Talbot ! while with thee
The muse gay roved the glad Hesperian round,
And drew the inspiring breath of ancient arts ;
Ah ! little thought she her returning verse
Should sing our darling subject to thy shade.

And does the mystic veil, from mortal beam,
 Involve those eyes where every virtue smiled,
 And all thy father's candid spirit shone ?
 The light of reason, pure, without a cloud ;
 Full of the generous heart, the mild regard ;
 Honour disdaining blemish, cordial faith,
 And limpid truth, that looks the very soul.
 But to the death of mighty nations turn
 My strain ; be there absorbed the private tear.

10

Musing, I lay ; warm from the sacred walks,
 Where at each step imagination burns :
 While scattered wide around, awful, and hoar,
 Lies, a vast monument, once glorious Rome,
 The tomb of empire, ruins ! that efface
 Whate'er, of finished, modern pomp can boast.

20

Snatched by these wonders to that world where
 thought
 Unfettered ranges, fancy's magic hand
 Led me anew o'er all the solemn scene,
 Still in the mind's pure eye more solemn dressed :
 When straight, methought, the fair majestic power
 Of Liberty appeared. Not, as of old,
 Extended in her hand the cap, and rod,
 Whose slave-enlarging touch gave double life :
 But her bright temples bound with British oak,
 And naval honours nodded on her brow.
 Sublime of port : loose o'er her shoulder flowed
 Her sea-green robe, with constellations gay.
 An island-goddess now ; and her high care
 The queen of isles, the mistress of the main.
 My heart beat filial transport at the sight ;
 And, as she moved to speak, the awakened muse
 Listened intense. Awhile she looked around,
 With mournful eye the well-known ruins marked,
 And then, her sighs repressing, thus began :

30

' Mine are these wonders, all thou seest is mine ; 40
 But ah, how changed ! the falling poor remains
 Of what exalted once the Ausonian shore.
 Look back through time : and, rising from the gloom,
 Mark the dread scene, that paints whate'er I say.

The great republic see, that glowed, sublime,
 With the mixed freedom of a thousand states ;
 Raised on the thrones of kings her curule chair,
 And by her fasces awed the subject world.
 See busy millions quickening all the land,
 With cities thronged, and teeming culture high : 50
 For nature then smiled on her free-born sons,
 And poured the plenty that belongs to men.
 Behold, the country cheering, villas rise
 In lively prospect ; by the secret lapse
 Of brooks now lost, and streams renowned in song ;
 In Umbria's closing vales, or on the brow
 Of her brown hills that breathe the scented gale :
 On Baiæ's viny coast ; where peaceful seas,
 Fanned by kind zephyrs, ever kiss the shore ;
 And suns unclouded shine, through purest air : 60
 Or in the spacious neighbourhood of Rome ;
 Far shining upward to the Sabine hills,
 To Anio's roar, and Tibur's olive shade ;
 To where Prenestè lifts her airy brow ;
 Or downward spreading to the sunny shore,
 Where Alba breathes the freshness of the main.

See distant mountains leave their valleys dry,
 And o'er the proud arcade their tribute pour,
 To lave imperial Rome. For ages laid,
 Deep, massy, firm, diverging every way,
 With tombs of heroes sacred, see her roads ; 70
 By various nations trod, and suppliant kings ;
 With legions flaming, or with triumph gay.

Full in the centre of these wondrous works,
 The pride of earth, Rome in her glory see.
 Behold her demigods, in senate met ;
 All head to counsel, and all heart to act :
 The commonweal inspiring every tongue
 With fervent eloquence, unbribed, and bold ;
 Ere tame corruption taught the servile herd
 To rank obedient to a master's voice.

80

Her forum see, warm, popular, and loud,
 In trembling wonder hushed, when the two sires,
 As they the private father greatly quelled,
 Stood up the public fathers of the state.
 See justice judging there, in human shape.
 Hark ! how with freedom's voice it thunders high,
 Or in soft murmurs sinks to Tully's tongue.

Her tribes, her census, see ; her generous troops,
 Whose pay was glory, and their best reward
 Free for their country and for me to die ;
 Ere mercenary murder grew a trade.

90

Mark, as the purple triumph waves along,
 The highest pomp and lowest fall of life.

Her festive games, the school of heroes, see :
 Her circus, ardent with contending youth :
 Her streets, her temples, palaces, and baths,
 Full of fair forms, of beauty's eldest born,
 And of a people cast in virtue's mould :
 While sculpture lives around, and Asian hills
 Lend their best stores to heave the pillared dome :
 All that to Roman strength the softer touch
 Of Grecian art can join. But language fails
 To paint this sun, this centre of mankind ;
 Where every virtue, glory, treasure, art,
 Attracted strong, in heightened lustre met.

100

Need I the contrast mark ? Unjoyous view !
A land in all, in government and arts,
In virtue, genius, earth, and heaven, reversed ;
Who but these far famed ruins to behold, 110
Proofs of a people whose heroic aims
Soared far above the little selfish sphere
Of doubting modern life ; who but inflamed
With classic zeal, these consecrated scenes
Of men and deeds to trace, unhappy land,
Would trust thy wilds, and cities loose of sway ?

Are these the vales that once exulting states
In their warm bosom fed ? The mountains these
On whose high-blooming sides my sons, of old,
I bred to glory ? These dejected towns, 120
Where, mean and sordid, life can scarce subsist,
The scenes of ancient opulence and pomp ?

Come, by whatever sacred name disguised,
Oppression, come, and in thy works rejoice.
See nature's richest plains to putrid fens
Turned by thy fury. From their cheerful bounds
See razed the enlivening village, farm, and seat.
First rural toil, by thy rapacious hand
Robbed of his poor reward, resigned the plough ;
And now he dares not turn the noxious glebe : 130
'Tis thine entire. The lonely swain himself,
Who loves at large along the grassy downs
His flocks to pasture, thy drear champaign flies.
Far as the sickening eye can sweep around
'Tis all one desert, desolate, and grey,
Grazed by the sullen buffalo alone ;
And where the rank uncultivated growth
Of rotting ages taints the passing gale,
Beneath the baleful blast the city pines,
Or sinks enfeebled, or infected burns. 140

Beneath it mourns the solitary road,
Rolled in rude mazes o'er the abandoned waste ;
While ancient ways, engulfed, are seen no more.

Such thy dire plains, thou self-destroyer, foe
To humankind ! Thy mountains too, profuse,
Where savage nature blooms, seem their sad plaint
To raise against thy desolating rod.

There on the breezy brow, where thriving states
And famous cities once, to the pleased sun,
Far other scenes of rising culture spread,
Pale shine thy ragged towns. Neglected round,
Each harvest pines ; the livid, lean produce
Of heartless labour : while thy hated joys,
Not proper pleasure, lift the lazy hand.

Better to sink in sloth the woes of life,
Than wake their rage with unavailing toil.
Hence drooping art almost to nature leaves
The rude unguided year. Thin wave the gifts
Of yellow Ceres, thin the radiant blush
Of orchard reddens in the warmest ray.

To weedy wildness run, no rural wealth
(Such as dictators fed) the garden pours.
Crude the wild olive flows, and foul the vine ;
Nor juice Cæcubian, nor Falernian, more
Streams life and joy, save in the muse's bowl.
Unseconded by art, the spinning race
Draw the bright thread in vain, and idly toil.
In vain, forlorn in wilds, the citron blows,
And flowering plants perfume the desert gale.
Through the vile thorn the tender myrtle twines : 170
Inglorious droops the laurel, dead to song,
And long a stranger to the hero's brow.

Nor half thy triumph this : cast, from brute fields,
Into the haunts of men thy ruthless eye.
There buxom plenty never turns her horn ;
The grace and virtue of exterior life,

No clean convenience reigns ; even sleep itself,
 Least delicate of powers, reluctant, there
 Lays on the bed impure his heavy head.

Thy horrid walk ! dead, empty, unadorned, 180
 See streets whose echoes never know the voice
 Of cheerful hurry, commerce many-tongued,
 And art mechanic at his various task,
 Fervent, employed. Mark the desponding race,
 Of occupation void, as void of hope ;
 Hope, the glad ray, glanced from eternal good,
 That life enlivens, and exalts its powers,
 With views of fortune—madness all to them !

By thee relentless seized their better joys,

To the soft aid of cordial airs they fly, 190
 Breathing a kind oblivion o'er their woes,
 And love and music melt their souls away.
 From feeble justice see how rash revenge,
 Trembling, the balance snatches ; and the sword,
 Fearful himself, to venal ruffians gives.
 See where God's altar, nursing murder, stands,
 With the red touch of dark assassins stained.

But chief let Rome, the mighty city, speak
 The full-exerted genius of thy reign.

Behold her rise amid the lifeless waste, 200
 Expiring nature all corrupted round ;
 While the lone Tiber, through the desert plain,
 Winds his waste stores, and sullen sweeps along.
 Patched from my fragments, in unsolid pomp,
 Mark how the temple glares ; and, artful dressed,
 Amusive, draws the superstitious train.
 Mark how the palace lifts a lying front,
 Concealing often, in magnific jail,
 Proud want : a deep unanimated gloom ;
 And oft adjoining to the drear abode 210
 Of misery, whose melancholy walls
 Seem its voracious grandeur to reproach.

Within the city bounds, the desert see ;
 See the rank vine o'er subterranean roofs,
 Indecent, spread ; beneath whose fretted gold
 It once, exulting, flowed. The people mark,
 Matchless, while fired by me ; to public good
 Inexorably firm, just, generous, brave,
 Afraid of nothing but unworthy life,
 Elate with glory, an heroic soul

220

Known to the vulgar breast. Behold them now,
 A thin despairing number, all-subdued,
 The slaves of slaves, by superstition fooled,
 By vice unmanned and a licentious rule ;
 In guile ingenious, and in murder brave.
 Such in one land, beneath the same fair clime,
 Thy sons, oppression, are ; and such were mine.

Even with thy laboured pomp, for whose vain
 show

Deluded thousands starve ; all age-begrimed,
 Torn, robbed, and scattered in unnumbered sacks, 230
 And by the tempest of two thousand years
 Continual shaken, let my ruins vie.

These roads that yet the Roman hand assert,
 Beyond the weak repair of modern toil ;
 These fractured arches, that the chiding stream
 No more delighted hear ; these rich remains
 Of marbles now unknown, where shines imbibed
 Each parent ray ; these massy columns, hewed
 From Afric's farthest shore ; one granite all,
 These obelisks high-towering to the sky, 240
 Mysterious marked with dark Egyptian lore ;
 These endless wonders that this sacred way
 Illumine still, and consecrate to fame ;
 These fountains, vases, urns, and statues, charged
 With the fine stores of art-completing Greece.
 Mine is, besides, thy every later boast :
 Thy Buonarotis, thy Palladios mine ;

And mine the fair designs, which Raphael's soul
O'er the live canvas, emanating, breathed.

What would you say, ye conquerors of earth, 250
Ye Romans ! could you raise the laurelled head ;
Could you the country see, by seas of blood,
And the dread toil of ages, won so dear ;
Your pride, your triumph, your supreme delight ;
For whose defence oft, in the doubtful hour,
You rushed with rapture down the gulf of fate,
Of death ambitious ; till by awful deeds,
Virtues, and courage, that amaze mankind,
The queen of nations rose ; possessed of all
Which nature, art, and glory could bestow : 260
What would you say, deep in the last abyss
Of slavery, vice, and unambitious want,
Thus to behold her sunk ? Your crowded plains,
Void of their cities ; unadorned your hills ;
Ungraced your lakes ; your ports to ships unknown ;
Your lawless floods, and your abandoned streams ;
These could you know, these could you love again ?
Thy Tibur, Horace, could it now inspire
Content, poetic ease, and rural joy,
Soon bursting into song : while through the groves 270
Of headlong Anio, dashing to the vale,
In many a tortured stream, you mused along ?
Yon wild retreat, where superstition dreams,
Could, Tully, you your Tusculum believe ?
And could you deem yon naked hills, that form,
Famed in old song, the ship-forsaken bay,
Your Formian shore ; once the delight of earth,
Where art and nature, ever smiling, joined
On the gay land to lavish all their stores ?
How changed, how vacant, Virgil, wide around, 280
Would now your Naples seem, disastered less
By black Vesuvius thundering o'er the coast
His midnight earthquakes, and his mining fires,

Than by despotic rage, that inward gnaws
A native foe ; a foreign tears without.

First from your flattered Cæsars this began :
Till, doomed to tyrants an eternal prey,
Thin peopled spreads, at last, the syren plain,
That the dire soul of Hannibal disarmed ;
And wrapped in weeds the shore of Venus lies. 290
There Baiæ sees no more the joyous throng,
Her banks all beaming with the pride of Rome :
No generous vines now bask along the hills,
Where sport the breezes of the Tyrrhene main :
With baths and temples mixed no villas rise ;
Nor, art-sustained amid reluctant waves,
Draw the cool murmurs of the breathing deep.
No spreading ports their sacred arms extend :
No mighty moles the big intrusive storm,
From the calm station, roll resounding back. 300

An almost total desolation sits,
A dreary stillness, saddening o'er the coast ;
Where, when soft suns and tepid winters rose,
Rejoicing crowds inhaled the balm of peace ;
Where citied hill to hill reflected blaze ;
And where, with Ceres, Bacchus wont to hold
A genial strife. Her youthful form, robust,
Even nature yields ; by fire and earthquake rent :
Whole stately cities in the dark abrupt
Swallowed at once, or vile in rubbish laid, 310
A nest for serpents ; from the red abyss
New hills, explosive, thrown ; the Lucrine lake
A reedy pool : and all to Cuma's point,
The sea recovering his usurped domain,
And poured triumphant o'er the buried dome.

Hence, Britain, learn ; my best established, last,
And more than Greece, or Rome, my steady reign ;
The land where, king and people equal bound
By guardian laws, my fullest blessings flow ;

And where my jealous unsubmitting soul,
The dread of tyrants, burns in every breast :
Learn hence, if such the miserable fate
Of an heroic race, the masters once
Of humankind ; what, when deprived of me,
How grievous must be thine ? In spite of climes,
Whose sun-enlivened ether wakes the soul
To higher powers ; in spite of happy soils,
That, but by labour's slightest aid impelled,
With treasures teem to thy cold clime unknown ;
If there desponding fail the common arts,
And sustenance of life : could life itself,
Far less a thoughtless tyrant's hollow pomp,
Subsist with thee ; against depressing skies,
Joined to full-spread oppression's cloudy brow,
How could thy spirits hold ; where vigour find,
Forced fruits to tear from their unnative soil ;
Or, storing every harvest in thy ports,
To plough the dreadful all-producing wave ? '

Here paused the goddess. By the pause assured,
In trembling accents thus I moved my prayer ; 340

' Oh first, and most benevolent of powers !
Come from eternal splendours, here on earth,
Against despotic pride, and rage, and lust
To shield mankind ; to raise them to assert
The native rights and honour of their race :
Teach me, thy lowest subject, but in zeal
Yielding to none, the progress of thy reign,
And with a strain from thee enrich the muse.
As thee alone she serves, her patron, thou,
And great inspirer be. Then will she joy,
Though narrow life her lot, and private shade :
And when her venal voice she barters vile,
Or to thy open or thy secret foes,
May ne'er those sacred raptures touch her more,

By slavish hearts unfelt ; and may her song
 Sink in oblivion with the nameless crew,
 Vermin of state, to thy o'erflowing light
 That owe their being, yet betray thy cause '.

Then, condescending kind, the heavenly power
 Returned :—‘ What here, suggested by the scene, 360
 I slight unfold, record and sing at home,
 In that blest isle, where (so we spirits move)
 With one quick effort of my will, I am.
 There truth, unlicensed, walks, and dares accost
 Even kings themselves, the monarchs of the free !
 Fixed on my rock, there, an indulgent race
 O'er Britons wield the sceptre of their choice :
 And there, to finish what his sires began,
 A prince behold, for me who burns sincere,
 Even with a subject's zeal. He my great work 370
 Will parent-like sustain ; and, added, give
 The touch the graces and the muses owe.
 For Britian's glory swell his panting breast ;
 And ancient arts he emulous revolves :
 His pride to let the smiling heart abroad,
 Through clouds of pomp, that but conceal the man ;
 To please, his pleasure ; bounty, his delight,
 And all the soul of Titus dwells in him.’

Hail, glorious theme ! But how, alas, shall verse
 From the crude stores of mortal language drawn, 380
 How faint and tedious, sing, what, piercing deep,
 The goddess flashed at once upon my soul.
 For, clear precision all, the tongue of gods
 Is harmony itself ; to every ear
 Familiar known, like light to every eye.
 Meantime disclosing ages, as she spoke,
 In long succession poured their empires forth ;
 Scene after scene, the human drama spread ;
 And still the embodied picture rose to sight.

Oh thou ! to whom the muses owe their flame ; 390
Who bidds't, beneath the pole, Parnassus rise,
And Hippocrenè flow ; with thy bold ease,
The striking force, the lightning of thy thought,
And thy strong phrase, that rolls profound and clear ;
Oh, gracious goddess ! re-inspire my song ;
While I, to nobler than poetic fame
Aspiring, thy commands to Britons bear.

LIBERTY: PART II

GREECE

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THUS spoke the goddess of the fearless eye;
And at her voice, renewed, the vision rose:

' First, in the dawn of time, with eastern swains,
In woods, and tents, and cottages, I lived;
While on from plain to plain they led their flocks,
In search of clearer spring, and fresher field.
These, as increasing families disclosed
The tender state, I taught an equal sway.'

Few were offences, properties, and laws.
Beneath the rural portal, palm-o'erspread, 10
The father senate met. There justice dealt,
With reason then and equity the same,
Free as the common air, her prompt decree ;
Nor yet had stained her sword with subjects' blood.
The simpler arts were all their simple wants
Had urged to light. But instant, these supplied,
Another set of fonder wants arose,
And other arts with them of finer aim ;
Till, from refining want to want impelled,
The mind by thinking pushed her latent powers, 20
And life began to glow, and arts to shine.

At first, on brutes alone the rustic war
Launched the rude spear ; swift, as he glared along,
On the grim lion, or the robber wolf.
For then young sportive life was void of toil,
Demanding little, and with little pleased :
But when to manhood grown, and endless joys,
Led on by equal toils, the bosom fired ;
Lewd lazy rapine broke primeval peace,
And, hid in caves and idle forests drear, 30
From the lone pilgrim, and the wandering swain,
Seized what he durst not earn. Then brother's blood
First, horrid, smoked on the polluted skies.
Awful in justice, then the burning youth,
Led by their tempered sires, on lawless men,
The last worst monsters of the shaggy wood,
Turned the keen arrow, and the sharpened spear.
Then war grew glorious. Heroes then arose ;
Who, scorning coward self, for others lived,
Toiled for their ease, and for their safety bled. 40
West, with the living day, to Greece I came :
Earth smiled beneath my beam : the muse before
Sonorous flew, that low till then in woods
Had tuned the reed, and sighed the shepherd's pain ;

But now, to sing heroic deeds, she swelled
A nobler note, and bade the banquet burn.

For Greece my sons of Egypt I forsook ;
A boastful race, that in the vain abyss
Of fabling ages loved to lose their source,
And with their river traced it from the skies. 50

While there my laws alone despotic reigned,
And king, as well as people, proud obeyed ;
I taught them science, virtue, wisdom, arts ;
By poets, sages, legislators sought ;
The school of polished life, and human kind.
But when mysterious superstition came,
And, with her civil sister leagued, involved
In studied darkness the desponding mind ;
Then tyrant power the righteous scourge unloosed :
For yielded reason speaks the soul a slave. 60

Instead of useful works, like nature's, great,
Enormous cruel wonders crushed the land ;
And round a tyrant's tomb, who none deserved,
For one vile carcass perished countless lives.
Then the great dragon couched amid his floods,
Swelled his fierce heart, and cried, 'This flood is mine,
'Tis I that bid it flow.' But, undeceived,
His frenzy soon the proud blasphemer felt ;
Felt that, without my fertilizing power,
Suns lost their force, and Niles o'erflowed in vain. 70

Nought could retard me : nor the frugal state
Of rising Persia, sober in extreme,
Beyond the pitch of man, and thence reversed
Into luxurious waste : nor yet the ports
Of old Phœnicia, first for letters famed,
That paint the voice, and silent speak to sight ;
Of arts, prime source and guardian, by fair stars,
First tempted out into the lonely deep ;
To whom I first disclosed mechanic arts,
The winds to conquer, to subdue the waves, 80

With all the peaceful power of ruling trade ;
 Earnest of Britain. Nor by these retained ;
 Nor by the neighbouring land, whose palmy shore
 The silver Jordan laves. Before me lay
 The promised Land of Arts, and urged my flight.

Hail, nature's utmost boast, unrivalled Greece !
 My fairest reign ! Where every power benign
 Conspired to blow the flower of human kind.
 And lavished all that genius can inspire.

Clear sunny climates, by the breezy main, 90
 Iōnian or Ægean, tempered kind :

Light, airy soils : a country rich and gay,
 Broke into hills with balmy odours crowned,
 And, bright with purple harvest, joyous vales ;
 Mountains, and streams, where verse spontaneous
 flowed ;

Whence deemed by wondering men the seat of gods,
 And still the mountains and the streams of song.

All that boon nature could luxuriant pour
 Of high materials, and my restless arts
 Frame into finished life. How many states, 100
 And clustering towns, and monuments of fame,
 And scenes of glorious deeds, in little bounds ;
 From the rough tract of bending mountains, beat
 By Adria's here, there by Ægean waves ;
 To where the deep-adorning Cyclade Isles
 In shining prospect rise, and on the shore
 Of farthest Crete resounds the Libyan main !

O'er all two rivalled cities reared the brow,
 And balanced all. Spread on Eurotas' bank,
 Amid a circle of soft rising hills, 110
 The patient Sparta one : the sober, hard,
 And man-subduing city ; which no shape
 Of pain could conquer, nor of pleasure charm.
 Lycurgus there built, on the solid base
 Of equal life, so well a tempered state ;

Where mixed each government, in such just poise ;
 Each power so checking, and supporting each,
 That firm for ages, and unmoved, it stood,
 The fort of Greece ! without one giddy hour,
 One shock of faction, or of party rage. 120
 For, drained the springs of wealth, corruption there
 Lay withered at the root. Thrice happy land !
 Had not neglected art, with weedy vice
 Confounded, sunk. But if Athenian arts
 Loved not the soil ; yet there the calm abode
 Of wisdom, virtue, philosophic ease,
 Of manly sense and wit, in frugal phrase
 Confined, and pressed into Laconic force.
 There too, by rooting thence still treacherous self,
 The public and the private grew the same. 130
 The children of the nursing public all,
 And at its table fed ; for that they toiled,
 For that they lived entire, and even for that
 The tender mother urged her son to die.

Of softer genius, but not less intent
 To seize the palm of empire, Athens strove.
 Where, with bright marbles big and future pomp,
 Hymettus spread, amid the scented sky,
 His thymy treasures to the labouring bee,
 And to botanic hand the stores of health ; 140
 Wrapped in a soul-attenuating clime,
 Between Ilissus and Cephissus, glowed
 This hive of science, shedding sweets divine.
 Of active arts, and animated arms.
 There, passionate for me, an easy-moved,
 A quick, refined, a delicate, humane,
 Enlightened people reigned. Oft on the brink
 Of ruin, hurried by the charm of speech,
 Enforcing hasty counsel immature,
 Tottered the rash democracy ; unpoised, 150
 And by the rage devoured, that ever tears

A populace unequal ; part too rich,
 And part or fierce with want, or abject grown.
 Solon at last, their mild restorer, rose :
 Allayed the tempest ; to the calm of laws
 Reduced the settling whole ; and, with the weight
 Which the two senates to the public lent,
 As with an anchor fixed the driving state.

Nor was my forming care to these confined.
 For emulation through the whole I poured, 160
 Noble contention ! who should most excel
 In government well poised, adjusted best
 To public weal : in countries cultured high :
 In ornamental towns, where order reigns,
 Free social life, and polished manners fair :
 In exercise, and arms ; arms only drawn
 For common Greece, to quell the Persian pride :
 In moral science, and in graceful arts.
 Hence, as for glory peacefully they strove,
 The prize grew greater, and the prize of all. 170
 By contest brightened, hence the radiant youth,
 Poured every beam ; by generous pride inflamed,
 Felt every ardour burn : their great reward
 The verdant wreath, which sounding Pisa gave.

Hence flourished Greece ; and hence a race of men,
 As gods by conscious future times adored ;
 In whom each virtue wore a smiling air,
 Each science shed o'er life a friendly light,
 Each art was nature. Spartan valour hence,
 At the famed pass, firm as an isthmus stood ; 180
 And the whole eastern ocean, waving far
 As eye could dart its vision, nobly checked.
 While in extended battle, at the field
 Of Marathon, my keen Athenians drove
 Before their ardent band an host of slaves.

Hence through the continent ten thousand Greeks
 Urged a retreat, whose glory not the prime
 Of victories can reach. Deserts, in vain,
 Opposed their course; and hostile lands, unknown;
 And deep rapacious floods, dire banked with death; 190
 And mountains, in whose jaws destruction grinned;
 Hunger, and toil; Armenian snows, and storms;
 And circling myriads still of barbarous foes.
 Greece in their view, and glory yet untouched,
 Their steady column pierced the scattering herds,
 Which a whole empire poured; and held its way
 Triumphant, by the sage-exalted chief
 Fired and sustained. Oh light and force of mind,
 Almost almighty in severe extremes!
 The sea at last from Colchian mountains seen, 200
 Kind-hearted transport round their captains threw
 The soldiers' fond embrace; o'erflowed their eyes
 With tender floods, and loosed the general voice
 To cries resounding loud—'The sea! The sea!'

In Attic bounds hence heroes, sages, wits,
 Shone thick as stars, the milky way of Greece!
 And though gay wit and pleasing grace was theirs,
 All the soft modes of elegance and ease;
 Yet was not courage less, the patient touch
 Of toiling art, and disquisition deep. 210

My spirit pours a vigour through the soul,
 The unfettered thought with energy inspires,
 Invincible in arts, in the bright field
 Of nobler science, as in that of arms.
 Athenians thus, not less intrepid, burst
 The bonds of tyrant darkness, than they spurned
 The Persian chains: while through the city, full
 Of mirthful quarrel and of witty war,
 Incessant struggled taste, refining taste,
 And friendly free discussion, calling forth
 From the fair jewel, truth, its latent ray. 220

O'er all shone out the great Athenian sage,
 And father of philosophy : the sun,
 From whose white blaze, emerged, each various sect
 Took various tints, but with diminished beam.
 Tutor of Athens ! he, in every street,
 Dealt priceless treasure : goodness his delight,
 Wisdom his wealth, and glory his reward.
 Deep through the human heart, with playful art
 His simple question stole ; as into truth, 230
 And serious deeds, he smiled the laughing race ;
 Taught moral happy life, whate'er can bless,
 Or grace mankind ; and what he taught he was.
 Compounded high, though plain, his doctrine broke
 In different schools : the bold poetic phrase
 Of figured Plato ; Xenophon's pure strain,
 Like the clear brook that steals along the vale ;
 Dissecting truth, the Stagyrite's keen eye ;
 The exalted stoic pride ; the cynic sneer ;
 The slow-consenting academic doubt ; 240
 And, joining bliss to virtue, the glad ease
 Of Epicurus, seldom understood.
 They, ever candid, reason still opposed
 To reason ; and, since virtue was their aim,
 Each by sure practice tried to prove his way
 The best. Then stood untouched the solid base
 Of liberty, the liberty of mind :
 For systems yet, and soul-enslaving creeds,
 Slept with the monsters of succeeding times.
 From priestly darkness sprung the enlightening arts 250
 Of fire, and sword, and rage, and horrid names.

O Greece ! thou sapient nurse of finer arts !
 Which to bright science blooming fancy bore ;
 Be this, thy praise, that thou, and thou alone,
 In these hast led the way, in these excelled,
 Crowned with the laurel of assenting time.

In thy full language, speaking mighty things ;
 Like a clear torrent close, or else diffused
 A broad majestic stream, and rolling on
 Through all the winding harmony of sound : 260
 In it the power of eloquence, at large,
 Breathed the persuasive or pathetic soul ;
 Stilled by degrees the democratic storm,
 Or bade it threatening rise, and tyrants shook,
 Flushed at the head of their victorious troops.
 In it the muse, her fury never quenched,
 By mean unyielding phrase, or jarring sound,
 Her unconfined divinity displayed ;
 And, still harmonious, formed it to her will :
 Or soft depressed it to the shepherd's moan,
 Or raised it swelling to the tongue of gods. 270

Heroic song was thine ; the fountain bard,
 Whence each poetic stream derives its course.
 Thine the dread moral scene, thy chief delight !
 Where idle fancy durst not mix her voice,
 When reason spoke august ; the fervent heart
 Or plained, or stormed ; and in the impassioned man,
 Concealing art with art, the poet sunk.
 This potent school of manners, but when left
 To loose neglect, a land-corrupting plague, 280
 Was not unworthy deemed of public care,
 And boundless cost, by thee ; whose every son,
 Even last mechanic, the true taste possessed
 Of what had flavour to the nourished soul.

The sweet enforcer of the poet's strain,
 Thine was the meaning music of the heart.
 Not the vain trill, that, void of passion, runs
 In giddy mazes, tickling idle ears ;
 But that deep-searching voice, and artful hand,
 To which respondent shakes the varied soul. 290

Thy fair ideas, thy delightful forms,
 By love imagined, and the graces touched,
 The boast of well-pleased nature, sculpture seized
 And bade them ever smile in Parian stone.
 Selecting beauty's choice, and that again
 Exalting, blending in a perfect whole,
 Thy workmen left even nature's self behind.
 From those far different, whose prolific hand
 Peoples a nation : they for years on years,
 By the cool touches of judicious toil, 300
 Their rapid genius curbing, poured it all
 Through the live features of one breathing stone.
 There, beaming full, it shone ; expressing gods :
 Jove's awful brow, Apollo's air divine,
 The fierce atrocious frown of sinewed Mars,
 Or the sly graces of the Cyprian queen,
 Minutely perfect all ! Each dimple sunk,
 And every muscle swelled, as nature taught.
 In tresses, braided gay, the marble waved ;
 Flowed in loose robes, or thin transparent veils ; 310
 Sprung into motion ; softened into flesh ;
 Was fired to passion, or refined to soul.

Nor less thy pencil, with creative touch,
 Shed mimic life, when all thy brightest dames,
 Assembled, Zeuxis in his Helen mixed.
 And when Apelles, who peculiar knew
 To give a grace that more than mortal smiled,
 The soul of beauty ! called the queen of love,
 Fresh from the billows, blushing orient charms.
 Even such enchantment then thy pencil poured,
 That cruel-thoughted war the impatient torch
 Dashed to the ground ; and, rather than destroy
 The patriot picture, let the city 'scape. 320

First, elder sculpture taught her sister art . . .
 Correct design ; where great ideas shone

And in the secret trace expression spoke :
Taught her the graceful attitude ; the turn,
And beauteous airs of head ; the native act,
Or bold, or easy ; and, cast free behind,
The swelling mantle's well adjusted flow. 330

Then the bright muse, their eldest sister, came ;
And bade her follow where she led the way :
Bade earth, and sea, and air, in colours rise ;
And copious action on the canvas glow :
Gave her gay fable ; spread invention's store ;
Enlarged her view ; taught composition high,
And just arrangement, circling round one point,
That starts to sight, binds and commands the whole ;
Caught from the heavenly muse a nobler aim,
And, scorning the soft trade of mere delight, 340
O'er all thy temples, porticos, and schools,
Heroic deeds she traced, and warm displayed
Each moral beauty to the ravished eye.
There, as the imagined presence of the god
Aroused the mind, or vacant hours induced
Calm contemplation, or assembled youth
Burned in ambitious circle round the sage,
The living lesson stole into the heart,
With more prevailing force than dwells in words.
These rouse to glory ; while, to rural life,
The softer canvas oft reposed the soul. 350

There gaily broke the sun-illumined cloud ;
The lessening prospect, and the mountain blue,
Vanished in air ; the precipice frowned, dire ;
White, down the rock, the rushing torrent dashed ;
The sun shone, trembling, o'er the distant main ;
The tempest foamed, immense ; the driving storm
Saddened the skies, and, from the doubling gloom,
On the scathed oak the ragged lightning fell ;
In closing shades, and where the current strays, 360
With peace, and love, and innocence around,
Piped the lone shepherd to his feeding flock :

Round happy parents smiled their younger selves ;
And friends conversed, by death divided long.

To public virtue thus the smiling arts,
Unblemished handmaids, served ; the Graces they
To dress this fairest Venus. Thus revered,
And placed beyond the reach of sordid care,
The high awarders of immortal fame,
Alone for glory thy great masters strove ; 370
Courted by kings, and by contending states,
Assumed the boasted honour of their birth.

In architecture too thy rank supreme !
That art where most magnificent appears
The little builder, man ; by thee refined,
And, smiling high, to full perfection brought.
Such thy sure rules, that Goths of every age,
Who scorned their aid, have only loaded earth
With laboured heavy monuments of shame,
Not those gay domes that o'er thy splendid shore 380
Shot, all proportion, up. First unadorned,
And nobly plain, the manly Doric rose ;
The Ionic then, with decent matron grace,
Her airy pillar heaved ; luxuriant last,
The rich Corinthian spread her wanton wreath.
The whole so measured true, so lessened off
By fine proportion, that the marble pile,
Formed to repel the still or stormy waste
Of rolling ages, light as fabrics looked
That from the magic wand aerial rise. 390

These were the wonders that illuminated Greece,
From end to end — Here interrupting warm,
'Where are they now ? (I cried) say, goddess, where ?
And what the land, thy darling thus of old ?'
'Sunk ! (she resumed) deep in the kindred gloom
Of superstition, and of slavery, sunk !

No glory now can touch their hearts, benumbed
 By loose dejected sloth and servile fear ;
 No science pierce the darkness of their minds ;
 No nobler art the quick ambitious soul
 Of imitation in their breast awake.

400

Even to supply the needful arts of life,
 Mechanic toil denies the hopeless hand.
 Scarce any trace remaining, vestige grey,
 Or nodding column on the desert shore,
 To point where Corinth, or where Athens stood.
 A faithless land of violence, and death !
 Where commerce parleys, dubious, on the shore ;
 And his wild impulse curibus search restrains,
 Afraid to trust the inhospitable clime. 410
 Neglected nature fails ; in sordid want
 Sunk, and debased their beauty beams no more.
 The sun himself seems, angry, to regard
 Of light unworthy, the degenerate race ;
 And fires them oft with pestilential rays :
 While earth, blue poison steaming on the skies,
 Indignant, shakes them from her troubled sides.
 But as from man to man, fate's first decree,
 Impartial death the tide of riches rolls,
 So states must die and liberty go round. 420

Fierce was the stand, ere virtue, valour, arts,
 And the soul fired by me (that often, stung
 With thoughts of better times and old renown,
 From hydra-tryants tried to clear the land)
 Lay quite extinct in Greece, their works effaced,
 And gross o'er all unfeeling bondage spread.
 Sooner I moved my much reluctant flight,
 Poised on the doubtful wing : when Greece with Greece
 Embroiled in foul contention fought no more
 For common glory, and for common weal : 430
 But false to freedom, sought to quell the free ;
 Broke the firm band of peace and sacred love,

That lent the whole irrefragable force ;
And, as around the partial trophy blushed,
Prepared the way for total overthrow.
Then to the Persian power, whose pride they scorned,
When Xerxes poured his millions o'er the land,
Sparta, by turns, and Athens, vilely sued ;
Sued to be venal parricides, to spill
Their country's bravest blood, and on themselves 440
To turn their matchless mercenary arms.
Peaceful in Susa, then, sat the great king ;
And by the trick of treaties, the still waste
Of sly corruption, and barbaric gold,
Effectuated what his steel could ne'er perform.
Profuse he gave them the luxurious draught,
Inflaming all the land : unbalanced wide
Their tottering states ; their wild assemblies ruled,
As the winds turn at every blast the seas :
And by their listed orators, whose breath 450
Still with a factious storm infested Greece,
Roused them to civil war, or dashed them down
To sordid peace—Peace ! that, when Sparta shook
Astonished Artaxerxes on his throne,
Gave up, fair-spread o'er Asia's sunny shore,
Their kindred cities to perpetual chains.
What could so base, so infamous a thought
In Spartan hearts inspire ? Jealous, they saw
Respiring Athens rear again her walls :
And the pale fury fired them, once again 460
To crush this rival city to the dust.
For now no more the noble social soul
Of liberty my families combined :
But by short views, and selfish passions, broke,
Dire as when friends are rankled into foes,
They mixed severe, and waged eternal war :
Nor felt they, furious, their exhausted force ;
Nor, with false glory, discord, madness blind,
Saw how the blackening storm from Thracia came.

Long years rolled on, by many a battle stained, 470
 The blush and boast of fame ! where courage, art,
 And military glory shone supreme :
 But let detesting ages, from the scene
 Of Greece self-mangled, turn the sickening eye.
 At last, when bleeding from a thousand wounds,
 She felt her spirits fail ; and in the dust
 Her latest heroes, Nicias, Conon, lay,
 Agesilaus, and the Theban friends :
 The Macedonian vulture marked his time,
 By the dire scent of Cheronea lured, 480
 And, fierce descending, seized his hapless prey.

Thus tame submitted to the victor's yoke
 Greece, once the gay, the turbulent, the bold ;
 For every grace, and muse, and science born ;
 With arts of war, of government elate ;
 To tyrants dreadful, dreadful to the best ;
 Whom I myself could scarcely rule : and thus
 The Persian fetters, that enthralled the mind,
 Were turned to formal and apparent chains.

Unless corruption first deject the pride, 490
 And guardian vigour of the free-born soul,
 All crude attempts of violence are vain ;
 For firm within, and while at heart untouched,
 Ne'er yet by force was freedom overcome.
 But soon as independence stoops the head,
 To vice enslaved, and vice-created wants ;
 Then to some foul corrupting hand, whose waste
 These heightened wants with fatal bounty feeds :
 From man to man the slackening ruin runs,
 Till the whole state unnerved in slavery sinks.' 500

LIBERTY: PART III

ROME

CONTENTS

As this part contains a description of the establishment of Liberty in Rome, it begins with a view of the Grecian Colonies settled in the southern parts of Italy, which, with Sicily, constituted the Great Greece of the Ancients. With these colonies, the spirit of Liberty, and of Republics, spreads over Italy, to verse 32. Transition to Pythagoras and his philosophy, which he taught through these free states and cities, to verse 71. Amidst the many small Republics in Italy, Rome the destined seat of Liberty. Her establishment there dated from the expulsion of the Tarquins. How differing from that in Greece, to verse 88. Reference to a view of the Roman Republic given in the first part of this poem: to mark its rise and fall the peculiar purport of this. During its first ages, the greatest force of Liberty and virtue exerted, to verse 103. The source whence derived the heroic virtues of the Romans. Enumeration of these virtues. Thence their security at home; their glory, success, and empire abroad, to verse 226. Bounds of the Roman empire geographically described, to verse 257. The states of Greece restored to Liberty by Titus Quintus Flaminius, the highest instance of public generosity and beneficence, to verse 328. The loss of Liberty in Rome, to verse 360. Its causes, progress, and completion in the death of Brutus, to verse 485. Rome under the emperors, to verse 513. From Rome the goddess of Liberty goes among the northern nations; where, by infusing into them her spirit and general principles, she lays the groundwork of her future establishments; sends them in vengeance on the Roman Empire, now totally enslaved; and then, with arts and sciences in her train, quits earth during the dark ages, to verse 550. The celestial regions, to which Liberty retired, not proper to be opened to the view of mortals.

HERE, melting, mixed with air the ideal forms
That painted still whate'er the goddess sung.
Then I, impatient.—‘From extinguished Greece,
To what new region streamed the human day?’
She softly sighing, as when zephyr leaves,

Resigned to Boreas, the declining year,
 Resumed.—‘ Indignant, these last scenes fled ;
 And long ere then, Leucadia’s cloudy cliff,
 And the Ceraunian hills behind me thrown,
 All Latium stood aroused. Ages before, 10
 Great mother of republics ! Greece had poured,
 Swarm after swarm, her ardent youth around.
 On Asia, Afric, Sicily, they stooped,
 But chief on fair Hesperia’s winding shore ;
 Where, from Lacinium to Etrurian vales,
 They rolled increasing colonies along,
 And lent materials for my Roman reign.
 With them my spirit spread ; and numerous states
 And cities rose, on Grecian models formed ;
 As its parental policy and arts 20
 Each had imbibed. Besides, to each assigned,
 A guardian genius o’er the public weal
 Kept an unclosing eye ; tried to sustain,
 Or more sublime, the soul infused by me :
 And strong the battle rose, with various wave,
 Against the tyrant demons of the land.
 Thus they their little wars and triumphs knew ;
 Their flows of fortune, and receding times ;
 But almost all below the proud regard
 Of story vowed to Rome, on deeds intent 30
 That truth beyond the flight of fable bore.

Not so the Samian sage ; to him belongs
 The brightest witness of recording fame.
 For these free states his native isle forsook,
 And a vain tyrant’s transitory smile,
 He sought Crotona’s pure salubrious air ;
 And through Great Greece his gentle wisdom taught ;
 Wisdom that calmed for listening years the mind,
 Nor ever heard amid the storm of zeal.
 His mental eye first launched into the deeps 40
 Of boundless ether ; where unnumbered orbs,

Myriads on myriads, through the pathless sky
Unerring roll, and wind their steady way.
There he the full consenting choir beheld ;
There first discerned the secret band of love,
The kind attraction, that to central suns
Binds circling earths, and world with world unites.
Instructed thence, he great ideas formed
Of the whole-moving, all-informing God,
The Sun of beings ! beaming unconfin'd 50
Light, life, and love, and ever active power :
Whom nought can image, and who best approves
The silent worship of the moral heart,
That joys in bounteous heaven, and spreads the joy.
Nor scorned the soaring sage to stoop to life,
And bound his reason to the sphere of man,
He gave the four yet reigning virtues name ;
Inspired the study of the finer arts
That civilize mankind, and laws devised
Where, with enlightened justice, mercy mixed. 60
He even, into his tender system, took
Whatever shares the brotherhood of life :
He taught that life's indissoluble flame,
From brute to man, and man to brute again,
For ever shifting, runs the eternal round ;
Thence tried against the blood-polluted meal,
And limbs yet quivering with some kindred soul,
To turn the human heart. Delightful truth !
Had he beheld the living chain ascend,
And not a circling form, but rising whole. 70

Amid these small republics one arose
On yellow Tiber's bank, almighty Rome,
Fated for me. A nobler spirit warmed
Her sons ; and, roused by tyrants, nobler still
It burned in Brutus ; the proud Tarquins chased,
With all their crimes ; bade radiant eras rise,
And the long honours of the consul line.

Here from the fairer, not the greater, plan
 Of Greece I varied ; whose unmixing states,
 By the keen soul of emulation pierced,
 Long waged alone the bloodless war of arts,
 And their best empire gained. But to diffuse
 O'er men an empire was my purpose now :
 To let my martial majesty abroad ;
 Into the vortex of one state to draw
 The whole mixed force and liberty on earth ;
 To conquer tyrants, and set nations free.

Already have I given, with flying touch,
 A broken view of this my amplest reign.
 Now, while its first, last, periods you survey,
 Mark how it labouring rose, and rapid fell.

When Rome in noon-tide empire grasped the world,
 And, soon as her resistless legions shone,
 The nations stooped around ; though then appeared
 Her grandeur most ; yet in her dawn of power,
 By many a jealous equal people pressed,
 Then was the toil, the mighty struggle then ;
 Then for each Roman I a hero told ;
 And every passing sun, and Latian scene,
 Saw patriot virtues then, and awful deeds,
 That or surpass the faith of modern times,
 Or, if believed, with sacred horror strike.

For then, to prove my most exalted power,
 I to the point of full perfection pushed,
 To fondness and enthusiastic zeal,
 The great, the reigning passion of the free.
 That godlike passion ! which, the bounds of self
 Divinely bursting, the whole public takes
 Into the heart, enlarged, and burning high
 With the mixed ardour of unnumbered selves ;

80

90

100

110

Of all who safe beneath the voted laws
Of the same parent state, fraternal, live.
From this kind sun of moral nature flowed
Virtues, that shine the light of humankind,
And, rayed through story, warm remotest time.
These virtues too, reflected to their source,
Increased its flame. The social charm went round,
The fair idea, more attractive still,
As more by virtue marked ; till Romans, all
One band of friends, unconquerable grew.

120

Hence, when their country raised her plaintive
voice,

The voice of pleading nature was not heard ;
And in their hearts the fathers throbbed no more ;
Stern to themselves, but gentle to the whole.
Hence sweetened pain, the luxury of toil
Patience, that baffled fortune's utmost rage ;
High-minded hope, which at the lowest ebb,
When Brennus conquered, and when Cannæ bled,
The bravest impulse felt, and scorned despair.

Hence moderation a new conquest gained : 130

As on the vanquished, like descending heaven,
Their dewy mercy dropped, their bounty beamed,
And by the labouring hand were crowns bestowed.

Fruitful of men, hence hard laborious life,
Which no fatigue can quell, no season pierce.

Hence, independence, with his little pleased,
Serene, and self-sufficient, like a god ;

In whom corruption could not lodge one charm,
While he his honest roots to gold preferred ;

While truly rich, and by his Sabine field, 140
The man maintained, the Roman's splendour all
Was in the public wealth and glory placed :

Or ready, a rough swain, to guide the plough ;
Or else, the purple o'er his shoulder thrown,
In long majestic flow, to rule the state,

With wisdom's purest eye ; or, clad in steel,
 To drive the steady battle on the foe.
 Hence every passion, even the proudest, stooped
 To common good : Camillus, thy revenge ;
 Thy glory, Fabius. All submissive hence, 150
 Consuls, dictators, still resigned their rule,
 The very moment that the laws ordained.
 Though conquest o'er them clapped her eagle wings,
 Her laurels wreathed, and yoked her snowy steeds
 To the triumphal car ; soon as expired
 The latest hour of sway, taught to submit,
 (A harder lesson than to command)
 Into the private Roman sunk the chief.
 If Rome was served, and glorious, careless they
 By whom. Their country's fame they deemed their
 own ; 160

And above envy, in a rival's train,
 Sung the loud Iōs by themselves deserved.
 Hence matchless courage. On Cremera's bank,
 Hence fell the Fabii ; hence the Decii died ;
 And Curtius plunged into the flaming gulf.
 Hence Regulus the wavering fathers firmed,
 By dreadful counsel never given before ;
 For Roman honour sued, and his own doom.
 Hence he sustained to dare a death prepared
 By Punic rage. On earth his manly look 170
 Relentless fixed, he from a last embrace,
 By chains polluted, put his wife aside,
 His little children climbing for a kiss ;
 Then dumb through rows of weeping, wondering
 friends,

A new illustrious exile ! pressed along.
 Nor less impatient did he pierce the crowds
 Opposing his return, than if, escaped
 From long litigious suits, he glad forsook
 The noisy town a while and city cloud,
 To breathe Venafrian or Tarentine air. 180

Need I these high particulars recount ?
The meanest bosom felt a thirst for fame ;
Flight their worst death, and shame their only fear.
Life had no charms, nor any terrors fate,
When Rome and glory called. But, in one view,
Mark the rare boast of these unequalled times.
Ages revolved unsullied by a crime :
Astrea reigned, and scarcely needed laws
To bind a race elated with the pride
Of virtue, and disdaining to descend 190
To meanness, mutual violence, and wrongs.
While war around them raged, in happy Rome
All peaceful smiled, all save the passing clouds
That often hang on freedom's jealous brow ;
And fair unblemished centuries elapsed,
When not a Roman bled but in the field.
Their virtue such, that an unbalanced state,
Still between noble and plebeian tossed,
As flowed the wave of fluctuating power,
By that kept firm, and with triumphant prow 200
Rode out the storms. Oft though the native feuds,
That from the first their constitution shook,
(A latent ruin, growing as it grew)
Stood on the threatening point of civil war
Ready to rush : yet could the lenient voice
Of wisdom, soothing the tumultuous soul,
These sons of virtue calm. Their generous hearts
Unpetrified by self, so naked lay
And sensible to truth, that, o'er the rage
Of giddy faction, by oppression swelled, 210
Prevailed a simple fable, and at once
To peace recovered the divided state.
But if their often cheated hopes refused
The soothing touch, still, in the love of Rome,
The dread dictator found a sure resource.
Was she assaulted, was her glory stained ?
One common quarrel wide inflamed the whole.

Foes in the forum in the field were friends,
By social danger bound ; each fond for each,
And for their dearest country all, to die.

Thus up the hill of empire slow they toiled,
Till, the bold summit gained, the thousand states
Of proud Italia blended into one ;
Then o'er the nations they resistless rushed,
And touched the limits of the failing world.

Let fancy's eye the distant lines unite.
See that which borders wild the western main,
Where storms at large resound, and tides immense ;
From Caledonia's dim cerulean coast,
And moist Hibernia, to where Atlas, lodged 230
Amid the restless clouds and leaning heaven,
Hangs o'er the deep that borrows thence its name.
Mark that opposed, where first the springing morn
Her roses sheds, and shakes around her dews :
From the dire deserts by the Caspian laved,
To where the Tigris and Euprates, joined,
Impetuous tear the Babylonian plain ;
And blest Arabia aromatic breathes.
See that dividing far the watery north,
Parent of floods ! from the majestic Rhine, 240
Drunk by Batavian meads, to where, seven-mouthed,
In Euxine waves the flashing Danube roars ;
To where the frozen Tanais scarcely stirs
The dead Maeotic pool, or the long Rha,
In the black Scythian sea, his torrent throws.
Last, that beneath the burning zone behold :
See where it runs, from the deep-loaded plains
Of Mauretania to the Libyan sands,
Where Ammon lifts, amid the torrid waste,
A verdant isle, with shade and fountain fresh ; 250
And farther to the full Egyptian shore,
To where the Nile from Ethiopian clouds,
His never-drained ethereal urn, descends.

In this vast space what various tongues, and states !
 What bounding rocks, and mountains, floods, and seas !
 What purple tyrants quelled, and nations freed !

O'er Greece, descended chief, with stealth divine,
 The Roman bounty in a flood of day :
 As at her Isthmian games, a fading pomp !
 Her full-assembled youth innumEROUS swarmed. 260

On a tribunal raised, Flaminius sat :
 A victor he, from the deep phalanx pierced
 Of iron-coated Macedon, and back
 The Grecian tyrant to his bounds repelled.
 In the high thoughtless gaiety of game,
 While sport alone their unambitious hearts
 Possessed ; the sudden trumpet, sounding hoarse
 Bade silence o'er the bright assembly reign.

Then thus a herald :—" To the states of Greece
 The Roman people, unconfinED, restore 270
 Their countries, cities, liberties, and laws :
 Taxes remit, and garrisons withdraw."
 The crowd astonished half, and half informed,
 Stared dubious round ; some questioned, some ex-
 claimed.

(Like one who dreaming, between hope and fear,
 Is lost in anxious joy,) " Be that again,
 Be that again proclaimed, distinct, and loud."
 Loud, and distinct, it was again proclaimed ;
 And still as midnight in the rural shade,
 When the gale slumbers, they the words devoured, 280
 A while severe amazement held them mute,
 Then, bursting broad, the boundless shout to heaven
 From many a thousand hearts ecstatic sprung.
 On every hand re-bellowed to their joy
 The swelling sea, the rocks, and vocal hills :
 Through all her turrets stately Corinth shook ;
 And, from the void above of shattered air,
 The flitting bird fell breathless to the ground.

What piercing bliss, how keen a sense of fame,
 Did then, Flaminius, reach thy inmost soul ! 290
 And with what deep-felt glory didst thou then
 Escape the fondness of transported Greece !
 Mixed in a tempest of superior joy,
 They left the sports ; like Bacchanals they flew,
 Each other straining in a strict embrace,
 Nor strained a slave ; and loud acclaims till night
 Round the pro-consul's tent repeated rung.
 Then, crowned with garlands, came the festive hours ;
 And music, sparkling wine, and converse warm,
 Their raptures waked anew. "Ye gods !" they
 cried, 300

"Ye guardian gods of Greece ! and are we free ?
 Was it not madness deemed the very thought ?
 And is it true ? How did we purchase chains ?
 At what a dire expense of kindred blood ?
 And are they now dissolved ? An scarce one drop
 For the fair first of blessings had we paid ?
 Courage, and conduct, in the doubtful field,
 When rages wide the storm of mingling war,
 Are rare indeed ; but how to generous ends
 To turn success and conquest, rarer still : 310
 That the great gods and Romans only know.
 Lives there on earth, almost to Greece unknown,
 A people so magnanimous, to quit
 Their native soil, traverse the stormy deep,
 And by their blood and treasure, spent for us,
 Redeem our states, our liberties, and laws !
 There does ! there does ! Oh saviour, Titus ! Rome !"
 Thus through the happy night they poured their souls,
 And in my last reflected beams rejoiced.

As when the shepherd, on the mountain brow, 320
 Sits piping to his flocks and gamesome kids ;
 Meantime the sun, beneath the green earth sunk,
 Slants upward o'er the scene a parting gleam :
 Short is the glory that the mountain gilds,

Plays on the glittering flocks, and glads the swain ;
 To western worlds irrevocable rolled,
 Rapid, the source of light recalls his ray.'

Here interposing I—‘ Oh, queen of men !
 Beneath whose sceptre in essential rights
 Equal they live ; though placed for common good 330
 Various, or in subjection or command ;
 And that by common choice : alas ! the scene,
 With virtue, freedom, and with glory bright,
 Streams into blood, and darkens into woe.’
 Thus she pursued :—‘ Near this great era Rome
 Began to feel the swift approach of fate,
 That now her vitals gained : still more and more
 Her deep divisions kindling into rage,
 And war with chains and desolation charged.
 From an unequal balance of her sons 340
 These fierce contentions sprung ; and, as increased
 This hated inequality, more fierce
 They flamed to tumult. Independence failed ;
 Here by luxurious wants, by real there ;
 And with this virtue every virtue sank,
 As, with the sliding rock, the pile sustained.
 A last attempt, too late, the Gracchi made,
 To fix the flying scale, and poise the state.
 On one side swelled aristocratic pride ;
 With usury, the villain, whose fell gripe 350
 Bends by degrees to baseness the free soul ;
 And luxury rapacious, cruel, mean,
 Mother of vice ! While on the other crept
 A populace in want, with pleasure fired ;
 Fit for proscriptions, for the darkest deeds,
 As the proud feeder bade ; inconstant, blind,
 Deserting friends at need, and duped by foes :
 Loud and seditious, when a chief inspired
 Their headlong fury, but, of him deprived,
 Already slaves that licked the scourging hand. 360

This firm republic, that against the blast
 Of opposition rose ; that (like an oak,
 Nursed on ferocious Algidum, whose boughs
 Still stronger shoot beneath the rigid axe)
 By loss, by slaughter, from the steel itself,
 Even force and spirit drew ; smit with the calm,
 The dead serene of prosperous fortune, pined.
 Nought now her weighty legions could oppose ;
 Her terror once, on Afric's tawny shore,
 Now smoked in dust, a stabling now for wolves ; 370
 And every dreaded power received the yoke.
 Besides, destructive, from the conquered east,
 In the soft plunder came that worst of plagues,
 That pestilence of mind, a fevered thirst
 For the false joys which luxury prepares.
 Unworthy joys ! that wasteful leave behind
 No mark of honour, in reflecting hour,
 No secret ray to glad the conscious soul ;
 At once involving, in one ruin, wealth,
 And wealth-acquiring powers : while stupid self, 380
 Of narrow gust, and hebetating sense,
 Devour the nobler faculties of bliss.
 Hence Roman virtue slackened into sloth ;
 Security relaxed the softening state ;
 And the broad eye of government lay closed.
 No more the laws inviolable reigned,
 And public weal no more : but party raged ;
 And partial power, and license unrestrained,
 Let discord through the deathful city loose.
 First, mild Tiberius, on thy sacred head 390
 The fury's vengeance fell ; the first, whose blood
 Had, since the consuls, stained contending Rome.
 Of precedent pernicious ! With thee bled
 Three hundred Romans ; with thy brother, next,
 Three thousand more : till, into battles turned
 Debates of peace, and forced the trembling laws,
 The Forum and Comitia horrid grew,

A scene of bartered power, or reeking gore.
 When, half-ashamed, corruption's thievish arts,
 And ruffian force begin to sap the mounds
 And majesty of laws ; if not in time
 Repressed severe, for human aid too strong
 The torrent turns, and overbears the whole.

400

Thus luxury, dissension, a mixed rage
 Of boundless pleasure and of boundless wealth,
 Want-wishing change, and waste-repairing war,
 Rapine for ever lost to peaceful toil,
 Guilt unatoned, profuse of blood revenge,
 Corruption all avowed, and lawless force,
 Each heightening each, alternate shook the state. 410
 Meantime ambition, at the dazzling head
 Of hardy legions, with the laurels heaped
 And spoil of nations, in one circling blast
 Combined in various storm, and from its base
 The broad republic tore. By virtue built
 It touched the skies, and spread o'er sheltered earth
 An ample roof : by virtue too sustained,
 And balanced steady, every tempest sung
 Innoxious by, or bade it firmer stand.
 But when, with sudden and enormous change, 420
 The first of mankind sunk into the last,
 As once in virtue, so in vice extreme,
 This universal fabric yielded loose,
 Before ambition still ; and, thundering down
 At last, beneath its ruins crushed a world.
 A conquering people, to themselves a prey,
 Must ever fall ; when their victorious troops,
 In blood and rapine savage grown, can find
 No land to sack and pillage but their own.

430

By brutal Marius, and keen Sylla, first
 Effused the deluge dire of civil blood,
 Unceasing woes began, and this, or that,
 (Deep-drenching their revenge) nor virtue spared,

Nor sex, nor age, nor quality, nor name ;
 Till Rome, into an human shambles turned,
 Made deserts lovely.—Oh, to well-earned chains,
 Devoted race !—If no true Roman then,
 No Scævola there was, to raise for me
 A vengeful hand : was there no father, robbed
 Of blooming youth to prop his withered age ? 440
 No son, a witness to his hoary sire
 In dust and gore defiled ? No friend, forlorn ?
 No wretch that doubtful trembled for himself ?
 None brave, or wild, to pierce a monster's heart,
 Who, heaping horror round, no more deserved
 The sacred shelter of the laws he spurned ?
 No ! Sad o'er all, profound dejection sat,
 And nerveless fear. The slave's asylum theirs :
 Or flight, ill-judging, that the timid back
 Turns weak to slaughter ; or partaken guilt. 450
 In vain from Sylla's vanity I drew
 An unexampled deed. The power resigned,
 And all unhoped the commonwealth restored,
 Amazed the public, and effaced his crimes.
 Through streets yet streaming from his murderous hand
 Unarmed he strayed, unguarded, unassailed,
 And on the bed of peace his ashes laid ;
 A grace, which I to his demission gave.
 But with him died not the despotic soul.
 Ambition saw that stooping Rome could bear 460
 A master, nor had virtue to be free.
 Hence, for succeeding years, my troubled reign
 No certain peace, no spreading prospect knew.
 Destruction gathered round. Still the black soul,
 Or of a Catiline, or Rullus, swelled
 With fell designs ; and all the watchful art
 Of Cicero demanded, all the force,
 All the state-wielding magic of his tongue ;
 And all the thunder of my Cato's zeal.
 With these I lingered ; till the flame anew 470

Burst out in blaze immense, and wrapped the world.
 The shameful contest sprung, to whom mankind
 Should yield the neck : to Pompey, who concealed
 A rage impatient of an equal name ;
 Or to the nobler Cæsar, on whose brow
 O'er daring vice deluding virtue smiled,
 And who no less a vain superior scorned.
 Both bled, but bled in vain. New tratiors rose.
 The venal will be bought, the base have lords.
 To these vile wars I left ambitious slaves ; 480
 And from Philippi's field, from where in dust
 The last of Romans, matchless Brutus ! lay,
 Spread to the north untamed a rapid wing.

What though the first smooth Cæsars arts caressed,
 Merit, and virtue, simulating me ?
 Severely tender ! cruelly humane !
 The chain to clinch, and make it softer sit
 On the new-broken still ferocious state.
 From the dark third, succeeding, I beheld
 The imperial monsters all.—A race on earth 490
 Vindictive sent, the scourge of humankind !
 Whose blind profusion drained a bankrupt world ;
 Whose lust to forming nature seems disgrace ;
 And whose infernal rage bade every drop
 Of ancient blood, that yet retained my flame,
 To that of Pætus, in the peaceful bath,
 Or Rome's affrighted streets, inglorious flow.
 But almost just the meanly patient death,
 That waits a tyrant's un prevented stroke.
 Titus indeed gave one short evening gleam ; 500
 More cordial felt, as in the midst it spread
 Of storm, and horror. The delight of men !
 He who the day, when his o'erflowing hand
 Had made no happy heart, concluded lost ;
 Trajan and he, with the mild sire and son,
 His son of virtue ! eased awhile mankind ;

And arts revived beneath their gentle beam.
 Then was their last effort : what sculpture raised
 To Trajan's glory, following triumphs stole ;
 And mixed with Gothic forms, (the chisel's shame) 510
 On that triumphal arch, the forms of Greece.

Meantime o'er rocky Thrace, and the deep vales
 Of gelid Hæmus, I pursued my flight ;
 And, piercing farthest Scythia, westward swept
 Sarmatia, traversed by a thousand streams :
 A sullen land of lakes, and fens immense,
 Of rocks, resounding torrents, gloomy heaths,
 And cruel deserts black with sounding pine ;
 Where nature frowns, though sometimes into smiles
 She softens ; and immediate, at the touch 520
 Of southern gales, throws from the sudden glebe
 Luxuriant pasture, and a waste of flowers.
 But, cold-compressed, when the whole loaded heaven
 Descends in snow, lost in one white abrupt,
 Lies undistinguished earth ; and, seized by frost,
 Lakes, headlong streams, and floods, and oceans sleep.
 Yet there life glows ; the fury millions there
 Deep dig their dens beneath the sheltering snows :
 And there a race of men prolific swarms,
 To various pain, to little pleasure used; 530
 On whom, keen-parching, beat Riphæan winds ;
 Hard live their soil, and like their climate fierce,
 The nursery of nations ! These I roused,
 Drove land on land, on people people poured ;
 Till from almost perpetual night they broke,
 As if in search of day ; and o'er the banks
 Of yielding empire, only slave-sustained,
 Resistless raged ; in vengeance urged by me,

Long in the barbarous hearts the buried seeds
 Of freedom lay, for many a wintry age ;
 And though my spirit worked, by slow degrees, 540

Nought but its pride and fierceness yet appeared.
 Then was the night of time, that parted worlds.
 I quitted earth the while. As when the tribes
 Aërial, warned of rising winter, ride
 Autumnal winds, to warmer climates borne ;
 So, arts and each good genius in my train,
 I cut the closing gloom, and soared to heaven.

In the bright regions there of purest day,
 Far other scenes, and palaces, arise, 550
 Adorned profuse with other arts divine.
 All beauty here below, to them compared,
 Would, like a rose before the midday sun,
 Shrink up its blossom ; like a bubble break
 The passing poor magnificence of kings.
 For there the King of Nature, in full blaze,
 Calls every splendour forth ; and there his court,
 Amid ethereal powers, and virtues, holds :
 Angel, archangel, tutelary gods,
 Of cities, nations, empires, and of worlds. 560
 But sacred be the veil that kindly clouds
 A light too keen for mortals ; wraps a view
 Too softening fair, for those that here in dust
 Must cheerful toil out their appointed years.
 A sense of higher life would only damp
 The schoolboy's task, and spoil his playful hours.
 Nor could the child of reason, feeble man,
 With vigour through this infant-being drudge ;
 Did brighter worlds, their unimagined bliss
 Disclosing, dazzle and dissolve his mind.' 570

LIBERTY: PART IV

BRITAIN

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STRUCK with the rising scene, thus I, amazed :
‘ Ah, goddess, what a change ! is earth the same ?
Of the same kind the ruthless race she feeds ?
And does the same fair sun and ether spread
Round this vile spot their all-enlivening soul ?
Lo ! beauty fails ; lost in unlovely forms

Of little pomp, magnificence no more
 Exalts the mind, and bids the public smile :
 While to rapacious interest glory leaves
 Mankind, and every grace of life is gone.'

10

To this the power, whose vital radiance calls
 From the brute mass of man an ordered world :

' Wait till the morning shines, and from the depth
 Of Gothic darkness springs another day.

True, genius droops ; the tender ancient taste
 Of beauty, then fresh blooming in her prime,
 But faintly trembles through the callous soul ;
 And grandeur, or of morals or of life,

Sinks into safe pursuits, and creeping cares.

Even cautious virtue seems to stoop her flight,
 And aged life to deem the generous deeds
 Of youth romantic. Yet in cooler thought
 Well reasoned, in researches piercing deep
 Through nature's works, in profitable arts,
 And all that calm experience can disclose,
 (Slow guide, but sure) behold the world anew
 Exalted rise, with other honours crowned ;
 And, where my spirit wakes the finer powers,
 Athenian laurels still afresh shall bloom.

20

Oblivious ages passed ; while earth, forsook

30

By her best genii, lay to demons foul,

And unchained furies, an abandoned prey.

Contention led the van ; first small of size,

But soon dilating to the skies she towers,

Then, wide as air, the livid fury spread,

And, high her head above the stormy clouds,

She blazed in omens, swelled the groaning winds

With wild surmisings, battlings, sounds of war,

From land to land the maddening trumpet blew,

And poured her venom through the heart of man.

40

Shook to the pole, the north obeyed her call.

Forth rushed the bloody power of Gothic war,
 War against human kind : rapine, that led
 Millions of raging robbers in his train :
 Unlistening, barbarous force, to whom the sword
 Is reason, honour, law : the foe of arts
 By monsters followed, hideous to behold,
 That claimed their place. Outrageous mixed with
 these

Another species of tyrannic rule ;
 Unknown before, whose cankerous shackles seized 50
 The envenomed soul ; a wilder fury, she
 Even o'er her elder sister tyrannized ;
 Or, if perchance agreed, inflamed her rage.
 Dire was her train, and loud : the sable band,
 Thundering, "Submit, ye laity ! ye profane !
 Earth is the Lord's, and therefore ours ; let kings
 Allow the common claim, and half be theirs ;
 If not, behold ! the sacred lightning flies !"
 Scholastic discord, with a hundred tongues,
 For science uttering jangling words obscure, 60
 Where frightened reason never yet could dwell.
 Of peremptory feature, cleric pride,
 Whose reddening cheek no contradiction bears ;
 And holy slander, his associate firm,
 On whom the lying spirit still descends :
 Mother of tortures ! persecuting zeal,
 High flashing in her hand the ready torch,
 Or poniard bathed in unbelieving blood ;
 Hell's fiercest fiend ! of saintly brow demure,
 Assuming a celestial seraph's name, 70
 While she beneath the blasphemous pretence
 Of pleasing parent heaven, the source of love,
 Has wrought more horrors, more detested deeds
 Than all the rest combined. Led on by her,
 And wild of head to work her fell designs,
 Came idiot superstition ; round with ears
 Innumerable strowed, ten thousand monkish forms

With legends plied them, and with tenets, meant
 To charm or scale the simple into slaves,
 And poison reason ; gross, she swallows all,
 The most absurd believing ever most.
 Broad o'er the whole her universal night,
 The gloom still doubling, ignorance diffused.

80

Nought to be seen, but visionary monks
 To councils strolling, and embroiling creeds ;
 Banditti saints disturbing distant lands ;
 And unknown nations, wandering for a home.
 All lay reversed : the sacred arts of rule
 Turned to flagitious leagues against mankind,
 And arts of plunder more and more avowed ;
 Pure plain devotion to a solemn farce ;
 To holy dotage virtue, even to guile,
 To murder, and a mockery of oaths ;
 Brave ancient freedom to the rage of slaves,
 Proud of their state, and fighting for their chains ;
 Dishonoured courage to the bravo's trade,
 To civil broil ; and glory to romance.
 Thus human life, unhinged, to ruin reeled,
 And giddy reason tottered on her throne.

90

At last heaven's best inexplicable scheme,
 Disclosing, bade new brightening eras smile.
 The high command gone forth, arts in my train
 And azure-mantled science, swift we spread
 A sounding pinion. Eager pity, mixed
 With indignation, urged her downward flight.
 On Latium first we stooped, for doubtful life
 That panted, sunk beneath unnumbered woes.
 Ah, poor Italia ! what a bitter cup
 Of vengeance hast thou drained ? Goth, Vandals, Huns,
 Lombards, barbarians broke from every land,
 How many a ruffian form hast thou beheld ?
 What horrid jargons heard, where rage alone
 Was all thy frightened ear could comprehend ?

100

110

How frequent by the red inhuman hand,
 Yet warm with brother's, husband's, father's blood,
 Hast thou thy matrons and thy virgins seen
 To violation dragged, and mingled death ?
 What conflagrations, earthquakes, ravage, floods,
 Have turned thy cities into stony wilds ;
 And, succourless and bare, the poor remains 120
 Of wretches forth to nature's common cast ?
 Added to these the still continual waste
 Of inbred foes that on thy vitals prey,
 And, double tyrants, seize the very soul.
 Where hadst thou treasures for this rapine all ?
 These hungry myriads, that thy bowels tore,
 Heaped sack on sack, and buried in their rage
 Wonders of art ; whence this grey scene, a mine
 Of more than gold becomes and orient gems,
 Where Egypt, Greece, and Rome united glow. 130

Here sculpture, painting, architecture, bent
 From ancient models to restore their arts,
 Remained. A little trace we how they rose.

Amid the hoary ruins, sculpture first,
 Deep digging, from the cavern dark and damp,
 Their grave for ages, bade her marble race
 Spring to new light. Joy sparkled in her eyes,
 And old remembrance thrilled in every thought,
 As she the pleasing resurrection saw.
 In leaning site, respiring from his toils, 140
 The well-known hero who delivered Greece,
 His ample chest, all tempested with force,
 Unconquerable reared. She saw the head,
 Breathing the hero, small, of Grecian size,
 Scarce more extensive than the sinewy neck.
 The spreading shoulders, muscular, and broad ;
 The whole a mass of swelling sinews, touched
 Into harmonious shape ; she saw, and joyed.

The yellow hunter, Meleager, raised
 His beauteous front, and through the finished whole 150
 Shows what ideas smiled of old in Greece.
 Of raging aspect, rushed impetuous forth
 The gladiator : pitiless his look,
 And each keen sinew braced, the storm of war,
 Ruffling, o'er all his nervous body frowns.
 The dying other from the gloom she drew :
 Supported on his shortened arm he leans,
 Prone, agonizing ; with incumbent fate,
 Heavy declines his head ; yet dark beneath
 The suffering feature sullen vengeance lours, 160
 Shame, indignation, unaccomplished rage,
 And still the cheated eye expects his fall.
 All conquest-flushed, from prostrate Python, came
 The quivered god. In graceful act he stands,
 His arm extended with the slackened bow :
 Light flows his easy robe, and fair displays
 A manly softened form. The bloom of gods
 Seems youthful o'er the beardless cheek to wave :
 His features yet heroic ardour warms ;
 And sweet subsiding to a native smile, 170
 Mixed with the joy elating conquest gives,
 A scattered frown exalts his matchless air.
 On Flora moved ; her full proportioned limbs
 Rise through the mantle fluttering in the breeze.
 The queen of love arose, as from the deep
 She sprung in all the melting pomp of charms.
 Bashful she bends, her well taught look aside
 Turns in enchanting guise, where dubious mix
 Vain conscious beauty, a dissembled sense
 Of modest shame, and slippery looks of love. 180
 The gazer grows enamoured, and the stone,
 As if exulting in its conquest, smiles.
 So turned each limb, so swelled with softening art,
 That the deluded eye the marble doubts.
 At last her utmost masterpiece she found

That Maro fired ; the miserable sire,
 Wrapped with his sons in fate's severest grasp :
 The serpents, twisting round, their stringent folds
 Inextricable tie. Such passion here,
 Such agonies, such bitterness of pain, 190
 Seem so to tremble through the tortured stone,
 That the touched heart engrosses all the view.
 Almost unmarked the best proportions pass,
 That ever Greece beheld ; and, seen alone,
 On the rapt eye the imperious passions seize :
 The father's double pangs, both for himself
 And sons convulsed ; to heaven his rueful look,
 Imploring aid, and half accusing, cast ;
 His fell despair with indignation mixed,
 As the strong curling monsters from his side 200
 His full extended fury cannot tear.
 More tender touched, with varied art, his sons
 All the soft rage of younger passions show.
 In a boy's helpless fate one sinks oppressed;
 While, yet unpierced, the frightened other tries
 His foot to steal out of the horrid twine.

She bore no more, but straight from Gothic rust
 Her chisel cleared, and dust and fragments drove
 Impetuous round. Successive as it went
 From son to son, with more enlivening touch, 210
 From the brute rock it called the breathing form ;
 Till, in a legislator's awful grace
 Dressed, Buonarti bade a Moses rise,
 And, looking love immense, a Saviour God.

Of these observant, painting felt the fire
 Burn inward. Then, ecstatic, she diffused
 The canvas, seized the pallet, with quick hand
 The colours brewed ; and on the void expanse
 Her gay creation poured, her mimic world.
 Poor was the manner of her eldest race, 220

Barren, and dry ; just struggling from the taste
 That had for ages scared, in cloisters dim,
 The superstitious herd : yet glorious then
 Were deemed their works ; where undeveloped lay
 The future wonders that enriched mankind,
 And a new light and grace o'er Europe cast.
 Arts gradual gather streams. Enlarging this,
 To each his portion of her various gifts
 The goddess dealt, to none indulging all ;
 No, not to Raphael. At kind distance still 230
 Perfection stands, like happiness, to tempt
 The eternal chase. In elegant design,
 Improving nature : in ideas fair,
 Or great, extracted from the fine antique ;
 In attitude, expression, airs divine ;
 Her sons of Rome and Florence bore the prize.
 To those of Venice she the magic art
 Of colours melting into colours gave.
 Theirs too it was by one embracing mass
 Of light and shade, that settles round the whole, 240
 Or varies tremulous from part to part,
 O'er all a binding harmony to throw,
 To raise the picture, and repose the sight.
 The Lombard school, succeeding, mingled both.

Meantime dread fanes, and palaces, around,
 Reared the magnific front. Music again
 Her universal language of the heart
 Renewed ; and, rising from the plaintive vale,
 To the full concert spread, and solemn choir.

Even bigots smiled ; to their protection took 250
 Arts not their own, and from them borrowed pomp :
 For in a tyrant's garden these awhile
 May bloom, though freedom be their parent soil.

And now confessed, with gently growing gleam
 The morning shone, and westward streamed its light.

The muse awoke. Not sooner on the wing
 Is the gay bird of dawn. Artless her voice,
 Untaught and wild, yet warbled through the woods
 Romantic lays. But as her northern course
 She, with her tutor science, in my train, 260
 Ardent pursued, her strains more noble grew :
 While reason drew the plan, the heart informed
 The moral page, and fancy lent it grace.

Rome and her circling deserts cast behind,
 I passed not idle to my great sojourn.

On Arno's fertile plain, where the rich vine
 Luxuriant o'er Etrurian mountains roves,
 Safe in the lap reposed of private bliss,
 I small republics raised. Thrice happy they
 Had social freedom bound their peace, and arts, 270
 Instead of ruling power, ne'er meant for them,
 Employed their little cares, and saved their fate.

Beyond the rugged Apennines that roll
 Far through Italian bounds their wavy tops,
 My path too I with public blessings strowed :
 Free states and cities, where the Lombard plain,
 In spite of culture negligent and gross,
 From her deep bosom pours unbidden joys,
 And green o'er all the land a garden spreads.

The barren rocks themselves beneath my foot, 280
 Relenting bloomed on the Ligurian shore.
 Thick swarming people there, like emmets, seized
 Amid surrounding cliffs, the scattered spots,
 Which nature left in her destroying rage,
 Made their own fields, nor sighed for other lands.
 There, in white prospect from the rocky hill
 Gradual descending to the sheltered shore,
 By me proud Genoa's marble turrets rose.

And while my genuine spirit warmed her sons,
Beneath her Dorias, not unworthy, she
Vied for the trident of the narrow seas,
Ere Britain yet had opened all the main.

290

Nor be the then triumphant state forgot ;
Where, pushed from plundered earth, a remnant still
Inspired by me, through the dark ages kept
Of my old Roman flame some sparks alive :
The seeming god-built city, which my hand
Deep in the bosom fixed of wondering seas.
Astonished mortals sailed, with pleasing awe,
Around the sea-girt walls, by Neptune fenced, 300
And down the briny street ; where on each hand,
Amazing seen amid unstable waves,
The splendid palace shines ; and rising tides,
The green steps marking, murmur at the door.
To this fair queen of Adria's stormy gulf.
The mart of nations, long, obedient seas
Rolled all the treasure of the radiant east.
But now no more. Than one great tyrant worse
(Whose shared oppression lightens, as diffused)
Each subject tearing, many tyrants rose. 310
The least the proudest. Joined in dark cabal,
They jealous, watchful, silent, and severe,
Cast o'er the whole indissoluble chains :
The softer shackles of luxurious ease
They likewise added, to secure their sway.
Thus Venice fainter shines ; and commerce thus,
Of toil impatient, flags the drooping sail.
Bursting, besides, his ancient bounds, he took
A larger circle : found another seat,
Opening a thousand ports, and charmed with toil, 320
Whom nothing can dismay, far other sons.

The mountains then, clad with eternal snow,
Confessed my power. Deep as the rampant rocks,

By nature thrown insuperable round,
 I planted there a league of friendly states,
 And bade plain freedom their ambition be.
 There in the vale, where rural plenty fills,
 From lakes and meads and furrowed fields, her horn,
 Chief, where the Leman pure emits the Rhone,
 Rare to be seen, unguilty cities rise, 330
 Cities of br^thers formed : while equal life,
 Accorded gracious with revolving power,
 Maintains them free ; and, in their happy streets,
 Nor cruel deed, nor misery, is known.
 For valour, faith, and innocence of life
 Renowned, a rough laborious people, there,
 Not only give the dreadful Alps to smile,
 And press their culture on retiring snows,
 But, to firm order trained and patient war,
 They likewise know, beyond the nerve remiss 340
 Of mercenary force, how to defend
 The tasteful little their hard toil has earned,
 And the proud arm of Bourbon to defy.

Even, cheered by me, their shaggy mountains charm
 More than or Gallic or Italian plains ;
 And sickening fancy oft, when absent long
 Pines to behold their Alpine views again :
 The hollow-winding stream ; the vale, fair spread
 Amid an amphitheatre of hills ;
 Whence, vapour - winged, the sudden tempest 350
 springs :
 From steep to steep ascending, the gay train
 Of fogs, thick-rolled into romantic shapes :
 The flitting cloud, against the summit dashed ;
 And, by the sun illumined, pouring bright
 A gemmy shower : hung o'er amazing rocks,
 The mountain ash, and solemn sounding pine :
 The snow-fed torrent, in white mazes tossed,
 Down to the clear ethereal lake below.

And, high o'er topping all the broken scene,
 The mountain fading into sky ; where shines 360
 On winter, winter shivering, and whose top
 Licks from their cloudy magazine the snows.

From these descending, as I waved my course
 O'er vast Germania, the ferocious nurse
 Of hardy men, and hearts affronting death,
 I gave some favoured cities there to lift
 A nobler brow, and through their swarming streets,
 More busy, wealthy, cheerful, and alive,
 In each contented face to look my soul.

Thence the loud Baltic passing, black with storm, 370
 To wintry Scandinavia's utmost bound ;
 There I the manly race, the parent hive
 Of the mixed kingdoms, formed into a state
 More regularly free. By keener air
 Their genius purged, and tempered hard by frost,
 Tempest and toil their nerves, the sons of those
 Whose only terror was a bloodless death,
 They, wise and dauntless, still sustain my cause.
 Yet there I fixed not. Turning to the south,
 The whispering zephyrs sighed at my delay.' 380

Here, with the shifted vision, burst my joy :
 ' O the dear prospect ! O majestic view !
 See Britain's empire ! lo ! the watery vast
 Wide waves, diffusing the cerulean plain.
 And now, methinks, like clouds at distance seen,
 Emerging white from deeps of ether, dawn
 My kindred cliffs ; whence, wafted in the gale,
 Ineffable, a secret sweetness breathes.
 Goddess, forgive !—My heart, surprised, o'erflows
 With filial fondness for the land you bless.' 390
 As parents to a child complacent deign
 Approvance, the celestial brightness smiled,

Then thus—‘ As o'er the wave-resounding deep,
To my near reign, the happy isle, I steered
With easy wing ; behold ! from surge to surge,
Stalked the tremendous genius of the deep.
Around him clouds, in mingled tempest, hung ;
Thick flashing meteors crowned his starry head ;
And ready thunder reddened in his hand,
Or from it streamed compressed the gloomy cloud. 400
Where'er he looked the trembling waves recoiled.
He needs but strike the conscious flood, and, shook
From shore to shore, in agitation dire,
It works his dreadful will. To me his voice
(Like that hoarse voice that round the cavern howls,
Mixed with the murmurs of the falling main)
Addressed, began—“ By fate commissioned, go,
My sister goddess, now, to yon blest isle,
Henceforth the partner of my rough domain.
All my dread walks to Britons open lie. 410
Those that, resplendent, or with rosy morn,
Or yellow evening, flame ; those that, profuse,
Drunk by equator suns, severely shine ;
Or those that, to the poles approaching, rise
In billows rolling into Alps of ice.
Even, yet untouched by daring keel, be theirs
The vast Pacific, that on other worlds,
Their future conquest, rolls resounding tides.
Long I maintained inviolate my reign ;
Nor Alexanders me, nor Cæsars braved. 420
Still, in the crook of shore, the coward sail
Till now low crept, and peddling commerce plied
Between near joining lands. For Britons, chief,
It was reserved, with star-directed prow,
To dare the middle deep, and drive assured
To distant nations through the pathless main.
Chief, for their fearless hearts the glory waits.
Long months from land, while the black stormy night
Around them rages, on the groaning mast

With unshook knee to know their giddy way ; 430
 To sing, unquelled, amid the lashing wave ;
 To laugh at danger. Theirs the triumph be,
 By deep invention's keen pervading eye,
 The heart of courage, and the hand of toil,
 Each conquered ocean staining with their blood,
 Instead of treasure robbed by ruffian war,
 Round social earth to circle fair exchange,
 And bind the nations in a golden chain.
 To these I, honoured, stoop. Rushing to light
 A race of men behold, whose daring deeds 440
 Will in renown exalt my nameless plains
 O'er those of fabling earth, as hers to mine
 In terror yield. Nay, could my savage heart
 Such glories check, their unsubmittting soul
 Would all my fury brave, my tempest climb,
 And might in spite of me my kingdom force."
 Here, waiting no reply, the shadowy power
 Eased the dark sky, and to the deeps returned :
 While the loud thunder rattling from his hand,
 Auspicious, shook opponent Gallia's shore. 450

Of this encounter glad, my way to land
 I quick pursued, that from the smiling sea
 Received me joyous. Loud acclaims were heard ;
 And music, more than mortal, warbling, filled
 With pleased astonishment the labouring hind,
 Who for a while the unfinished furrow left,
 And let the listening steer forget his toil.
 Unseen by grosser eye, Britannia breathed,
 And her aerial train, these sounds of joy.
 For of old time, since first the rushing flood, 460
 Urged by Almighty power, this favoured isle
 Turned flashing from the continent aside,
 Indented shore to shore responsive still,
 Its guardian she—the goddess, whose staid eye
 Beams the dark azure of the doubtful dawn.

Her tresses, like a flood of softened light
 Through clouds imbrowned, in waving circles play.
 Warm on her cheek sits beauty's brightest rose.
 Of high demeanour, stately, shedding grace
 With every motion. Full her rising chest ; 470
 And new ideas from her finished shape,
 Charmed sculpture taking, might improve her
 art.

Such the fair guardian of an isle that boasts,
 Profuse as vernal blooms, the fairest dames.
 High shining on the promontory's brow,
 Awaiting me, she stood ; with hope inflamed,
 By my mixed spirit burning in her sons,
 To firm, to polish, and exalt the state.

The native genii, round her, radiant smiled.
 Courage, of soft deportment, aspect calm, 480
 Unboastful, suffering long, and, till provoked,
 As mild and harmless as the sporting child ;
 But, on just reason, once his fury roused,
 No lion springs more eager to his prey :
 Blood is a pastime ; and his heart, elate,
 Knows no depressing fear. That virtue known
 By the relenting look, whose equal heart
 For others feels, as for another self :
 Of various name, as various objects wake,
 Warm into action, the kind sense within : 490
 Whether the blameless poor, the nobly maimed,
 The lost to reason, the declined in life,
 The helpless young that kiss no mother's hand,
 And the grey second infancy of age,
 She gives in public families to live,
 A sight to gladden heaven ; whether she stands
 Fair beckoning at the hospitable gate,
 And bids the stranger take repose and joy ;
 Whether, to solace honest labour, she
 Rejoices those that make the land rejoice ; 500

Or whether to philosophy and arts,
 (At once the basis and the finished pride
 Of government and life) she spreads her hand ;
 Nor knows her gift profuse, nor seems to know,
 Doubling her bounty, that she gives at all.
 Justice to these her awful presence joined,
 The mother of the state. No low revenge,
 No turbid passions in her breast ferment :
 Tender, serene, compassionate of vice,
 As the last woe that can afflict mankind, 510
 She punishment awards ; yet of the good
 More piteous still, and of the suffering whole,
 Awards it firm. So fair her just decree,
 That, in his judging peers, each on himself
 Pronounces his own doom. O happy land,
 Where reigns alone this justice of the free !
 Mid the bright group, sincerity his front,
 Diffusive, reared ; his pure untroubled eye
 The fount of truth. The thoughtful power, apart,
 Now pensive, cast on earth his fixed regard, 520
 Now touched celestial, launched it on the sky.
 The genius he whence Britain shines supreme,
 The land of light, and rectitude of mind.
 He, too, the fire of fancy feeds intense,
 With all the train of passions thence derived :
 Not kindling quick, a noisy transient blaze,
 But gradual, silent, lasting, and profound.
 Near him retirement, pointing to the shade,
 And independence stood : the generous pair,
 That simple life, the quiet-whispering grove, 530
 And the still raptures of the free-born soul,
 To cates prefer by virtue bought, not earned,
 Proudly prefer them to the servile pomp,
 And to the heart-embittered joys of slaves.
 Or should the latter, to the public scene
 Demanded, quit his silvan friend awhile,
 Nought can his firmness shake, nothing seduce

His zeal, still active for the commonweal ;
 Nor stormy tyrants, nor corruption's tools,
 Foul ministers, dark-working by the force
 Of secret-sapping gold. All their vile arts,
 Their shameful honours, their perfidious gifts,
 He greatly scorns ; and, if he must betray
 His plundered country, or his power resign,
 A moment's parley were eternal shame :
 Illustrious into private life again,
 From dirty levees he unstained ascends,
 And firm in senates stands the patriot's ground,
 Or draws new vigour in the peaceful shade.

Aloof the bashful virtue hovered coy, 550
 Proving by sweet distrust distrusted worth.
 Rough labour closed the train ; and, in his hand,
 Rude, callous, sinew-swelled, and black with toil,
 Came manly indignation. Sour he seems,
 And more than seems, by lawless pride assailed ;
 Yet kind at heart, and just, and generous ; there
 No vengeance lurks, no pale insidious gall ;
 Even in the very luxury of rage,
 He, softening, can forgive a gallant foe ;
 The nerve, support, and glory of the land ! 560
 Nor be religion, rational and free,
 Here passed in silence ; whose enraptured eye
 Sees heaven with earth connected, human things
 Linked to divine : who not from servile fear,
 By rites for some weak tyrant incense fit,
 The god of love adores, but from a heart
 Effusing gladness, into pleasing awe
 That now astonished swells, now in a calm
 Of fearless confidence that smiles serene ;
 That lives devotion, one continual hymn, 570
 And then most grateful, when heaven's bounty
 most
 Is right enjoyed. This ever cheerful power
 O'er the raised circle rayed superior day.

540

550

560

570

I joyed to join the virtues, whence my reign
 O'er Albion was to rise. Each cheering each,
 And, like the circling planets from the sun,
 All borrowing beams from me, a heightened zeal
 Impatient fired us to commence our toils,
 Or pleasures rather. Long the pungent time
 Passed not in mutual hails ; but, through the land
 Darting our light, we shone the fogs away.

581

The virtues conquer with a single look.
 Such grace, such beauty, such victorious light,
 Live in their presence, stream in every glance,
 That the soul won, enamoured, and refined,
 Grows their own image, pure ethereal flame.
 Hence the foul demons that oppose our reign,
 Would still from us deluded mortals wrap,
 Or in gross shades they drown the visual ray,
 Or by the fogs of prejudice, where mix
 Falsehood and truth confounded, foil the sense
 With vain refracted images of bliss.

But chief around the court of flattered kings
 They roll the dusky rampart, wall o'er wall
 Of darkest pile, and with their thickest shade
 Secure the throne. No savage Alp, the den
 Of wolves, and bears, and monstrous things obscene,
 That vex the swain and waste the country round,
 Protected lies beneath a deeper cloud.

Yet there we sometimes send a searching ray. 600
 As, at the sacred opening of the morn,
 The prowling race retire ; so, pierced severe,
 Before our potent blaze these demons fly,
 And all their works dissolve ; the whispered tale,
 That, like the fabling Nile, no fountain knows ;
 Fair-faced deceit, whose wily conscious eye
 Ne'er looks direct ; the tongue that licks the dust,
 But, when it safely dares, as prompt to sting :
 Smooth crocodile destruction, whose fell tears

590

Ensnare : the Janus-face of courtly pride,
 One to superiors heaves submissive eyes,
 On hapless worth the other scowls disdain ;
 Cheeks that for some weak tenderness, alone,
 Some virtuous slip, can wear a blush ; the laugh
 Profane, when midnight bowls disclose the heart,
 At starving virtue, and at virtue's fools ;
 Determined to be broke, the plighted faith ;
 Nay more, the godless oath, that knows no ties ;
 Soft-buzzing slander ; silky moths, that eat
 An honest name ; the harpy hand and maw
 Of avaricious luxury, who makes
 The throne his shelter, venal laws his fort,
 And, by his service, who betrays his king.

610

620

Now turn your view, and mark from Celtic night
 To present grandeur how my Britain rose.

Bold were those Britons, who, the careless sons
 Of nature, roamed the forest-bounds, at once
 Their verdant city, high-embowering fane,
 And the gay circle of their woodland wars :
 For by the Druid taught, that death but shifts
 The vital scene, they that prime fear despised ;
 And, prone to rush on steel, disdained to spare
 An ill-saved life that must again return.
 Erect from nature's hand, by tyrant force,
 And still more tyrant custom, unsubdued,
 Man knows no master save creating heaven,
 Or such as choice and common good ordain.
 This general sense, with which the nations I
 Promiscuous fire, in Britons burned intense,
 Of future times prophetic. Witness Rome,
 Who saw'st thy Cæsar, from the naked land,
 Whose only fort was British hearts, repelled,
 To seek Pharsalian wreaths. Witness the toil,
 The blood of ages, bootless to secure,

630

640

Beneath an empire's yoke, a stubborn isle,
Disputed hard, and never quite subdued.

The north remained untouched, where those who
scorned

To stoop, retired ; and, to their keen effort
Yielding at last, recoiled the Roman power.

In vain, unable to sustain the shock,

650

From sea to sea desponding legions raised

The wall immense, and yet, on summer's eve,

While sport his lambkins round, the shepherd's gaze.

Continual o'er it burst the northern storm,

As often, checked, receded ; threatening hoarse

A swift return. But the devouring flood

No more endured control, when, to support

The last remains of empire, was recalled

The weary Roman, and the Briton lay

Unnerved, exhausted, spiritless, and sunk.

660

Great proof ! how men enfeeble into slaves.

The sword behind him flashed ; before him roared

Deaf to his woes, the deep. Forlorn, around

He rolled his eye, not sparkling ardent flame,

As when Caractacus to battle led

Silurian swains, and Boadicea taught

Her raging troops the miseries of slaves.

Then (sad relief !) from the bleak coast, that hears
The German Ocean roar, deep-blooming, strong,
And yellow-haired, the blue-eyed Saxon came.

670

He came implored, but came with other aim

Than to protect. For conquest and defence

Suffices the same arm. With the fierce race

Poured, in a fresh invigorating stream,

Blood, where unquelled a mighty spirit glowed.

Rash war, and perilous battle, their delight ;

And immature, and red with glorious wounds,

Unpeaceful death their choice ; deriving thence

A right to feast and drain immortal bowls

In Odin's hall, whose blazing roof resounds
The genial uproar of those shades who fall
In desperate fight, or by some brave attempt ;
And though more polished times the martial creed
Disown, yet still the fearless habit lives.
Nor were the surly gifts of war their all.
Wisdom was likewise theirs, indulgent laws,
The calm gradations of art-nursing peace,
And matchless order, the deep basis still
On which ascends my British reign. Untamed
To the refining subtleties of slaves,
They brought a happy government along ;
Formed by that freedom, which, with secret voice,
Impartial nature teaches all her sons ;
And which, of old, through the whole Scythian mass,
I strong inspired. Monarchical their state,
But prudently confined, and mingled wise
Of each harmonious power : only, too much,
Imperious war into their rule infused,
Prevailed their General-King, and Chieftain-Thanes.

In many a field, by civil fury stained,
Bled the discordant Heptarchy ; and long
(Educing good from ill) the battle groaned ;
Ere, blood-cemented, Anglo-Saxons saw
Egbert and peace on one united throne.

No sooner dawned the fair disclosing calm
Of brighter days, when lo ! the north anew,
With stormy nations black, on England poured
Woes the severest e'er a people felt.
The Danish raven, lured by annual prey,
Hung o'er the land incessant. Fleet on fleet
Of barbarous pirates, unremitting, tore
The miserable coast. Before them stalked,
Far seen, the demon of devouring flame,
Rapine, and murder, all with blood besmeared.

Without or ear, or eye, or feeling heart ;
 While close behind them marched the sallow power
 Of desolating famine, who delights
 In grass-grown cities, and in desert fields ;
 And purple-spotted pestilence, by whom
 Even friendship scared, in sickening horror sinks 720
 Each social sense and tenderness of life.
 Fixing at last, the sanguinary race
 Spread from the Humber's loud resounding shore
 To where the Thames devolves his gentle maze,
 And with superior arm the Saxon awed.
 But superstition first, and monkish dreams,
 And monk-directed cloister-seeking kings,
 Had eat away his vigour, eat away
 His edge of courage, and depressed the soul
 Of conquering freedom, which he once respired. 730
 Thus cruel ages passed, and rare appeared
 White-mantled peace, exulting o'er the vale,
 As when, with Alfred, from the wilds she came
 To policed cities and protected plains.
 Thus by degrees the Saxon empire sunk.
 Then set entire in Hastings' bloody field.

Compendious war ! (on Britain's glory bent,
 So fate ordained). In that decisive day
 The haughty Norman seized at once an isle
 For which, through many a century, in vain,
 The Roman, Saxon, Dane, had toiled and bled. 740
 Of Gothic nations this the final burst,
 And, mixed the genius of these people all,
 Their virtues mixed in one exalted stream,
 Here the rich tide of English blood grew full.

Awhile my spirit slept ; the land awhile,
 Affrighted, drooped beneath despotic rage.
 Instead of Edward's equal, gentle laws,
 The furious victor's partial will prevailed.

All prostrate lay ; and, in the secret shade,
 Deep stung but fearful, indignation gnashed
 His teeth. Of freedom, property, despoiled,
 And of their bulwark, arms ; with castles crushed,
 With ruffians quartered o'er the bridled land ;
 The shivering wretches, at the curfew sound,
 Dejected shrunk into their sordid beds,
 And, through the mournful gloom, of ancient times
 Mused sad, or dreamt of better. Even to feed
 A tyrant's idle sport the peasant starved :
 To the wild herd, the pasture of the tame,
 The cheerful hamlet, spiry town, was given,
 And the brown forest roughened wide around.

But this so dead, so vile submission, long
 Endured not. Gathering force, my gradual flame
 Shook off the mountain of tyrannic sway.
 Unused to bend, impatient of control,
 Tyrants themselves the common tyrant checked.
 The Church, by kings intractable and fierce,
 Denied her portion of the plundered state,
 Or tempted, by the timorous and weak,
 To gain new ground, first taught their rapine law. 770
 The barons next a nobler league began,
 Both those of English and of Norman race,
 In one fraternal nation blended now,
 The nation of the free. Pressed by a band
 Of patriots, ardent as the summer's noon
 That looks delighted on, the tyrant see !
 Mark how, with feigned alacrity, he bears
 His strong reluctance down, his dark revenge,
 And gives the charter, by which life indeed
 Becomes of price, a glory to be man. 780

Through this, and through succeeding reigns affirmed
 These long-contested rights, the wholesome winds
 Of opposition hence began to blow,
 And often since have lent the country life.

750

760

770

780

Before their breath corruption's insect-blight,
 The darkening clouds of evil counsel, fly ;
 Or should they sounding swell, a putrid court,
 A pestilential ministry, they purge,
 And ventilated states renew their bloom.

790

Though with the tempered monarchy here mixed
 Aristocratic sway, the people still,
 Flattered by this or that, as interest leaned,
 No full protection knew. For me reserved,
 And for my commons, was that glorious turn.
 They crowned my first attempt, in senates rose
 The fort of freedom ! Slow till then, alone,
 Had worked that general liberty, that soul
 Which generous nature breathes, and which, when left
 By me to bondage, was corrupted Rome, 800
 I through the northern nations wide diffused.
 Hence many a people, fierce with freedom, rushed
 From the rude iron regions of the north,
 To Libyan deserts swarm protruding swarm,
 And poured new spirit through a slavish world.
 Yet, o'er these Gothic states, the king and chiefs
 Retained the high prerogative of war,
 And with enormous property engrossed
 The mingled power. But on Britannia's shore
 Now present, I to raise my reign began 810
 By raising the democracy, the third
 And broadest bulwark of the guarded state.
 Then was the full, the perfect, plan disclosed
 Of Britain's matchless constitution, mixed
 Of mutual checking and supporting powers,
 King, Lords, and Commons ; nor the name of free
 Deserving, while the vassal-many drooped :
 For, since the moment of the whole they form,
 So, as depressed or raised, the balance they
 Of public welfare and of glory cast. 820
 Mark from this period the continual proof.

When kings of narrow genius, minion-rid ;
 Neglecting faithful worth for fawning slaves ;
 Proudly regardless of their people's plaints ;
 And poorly passive of insulting foes ;
 Double, not prudent ; obstinate, not firm ;
 Their mercy fear, necessity their faith ;
 Instead of generous fire, presumptuous, hot,
 Rash to resolve, and slothful to perform ;
 Tyrants at once and slaves, imperious, mean. 830

To want rapacious joining shameful waste ;
 By counsels weak and wicked, easy roused
 To paltry schemes of absolute command,
 To seek their splendour in their sure disgrace,
 And in a broken ruined people wealth :
 When such o'ercast the state, no bond of love,
 No heart, no soul, no unity, no nerve,
 Combined the loose disjointed public, lost
 To fame abroad, to happiness at home.

But when an Edward, and a Henry breathed 840
 Through the charmed whole one all-exerting soul :
 Drawn sympathetic from his dark retreat,
 When wide-attracted merit round them glowed :
 When counsels just, extensive, generous, firm,
 Amid the maze of state, determined kept
 Some ruling point in view : when, on the stock
 Of public good and glory grafted, spread
 Their palms, their laurels ; or, if thence they strayed,
 Swift to return, and patient of restraint ;
 When regal state, pre-eminence of place, 850
 They scorned to deem pre-eminence of ease,
 To be luxurious drones, that only rob
 The busy hive ; as in distinction, power,
 Indulgence, honour, and advantage, first ;
 When they too claimed in virtue, danger, toil,
 Superior rank ; with equal hand, prepared
 To guard the subject, and to quell the foe ;

When such with me their vital influence shed,
 No muttered grievance, hopeless sigh, was heard ;
 No foul distrust through wary senates ran, 860
 Confined their bounty, and their ardour quenched ;
 On aid, unquestioned, liberal aid was given ;
 Safe in their conduct, by their valour fired,
 Fond where they led victorious armies rushed ;
 And Cressy, Poitiers, Agincourt proclaim
 What kings supported by almighty love,
 And people fired with liberty, can do.

Be veiled the savage reigns, when kindred rage
 The numerous once Plantagenets devoured,
 A race to vengeance vowed ; and, when oppressed 870
 By private feuds, almost extinguished lay
 My quivering flame. But, in the next, behold
 A cautious tyrant lend it oil anew.

Proud, dark, suspicious, brooding o'er his gold,
 As how to fix his throne he jealous cast
 His crafty views around ; pierced with a ray,
 Which on his timid mind I darted full,
 He marked the barons of excessive sway,
 At pleasure making and unmaking kings ;
 And hence to crush these petty tyrants, planned 880
 A law that let them, by the silent waste
 Of luxury, their landed wealth diffuse,
 And, with that wealth, their implicated power.
 By soft degrees a mighty change ensued,
 Even working to this day. With streams, deduced
 From these diminished floods, the country smiled.
 As when impetuous from the snow-heaped Alps.
 To vernal suns relenting, pours the Rhine ;
 While, undivided, oft, with wasteful sweep,
 He foams along ; but through Batavian meads, 890
 Branched into fair canals, indulgent flows ;
 Waters a thousand fields ; and culture, trade,

Towns, meadows, gliding ships, and villas mixed,
A rich, a wondrous landscape rises round.

His furious son the soul-enslaving chain,
Which many a doting venerable age
Had link by link strong twisted round the land,
Shook off. No longer could be borne a power,
From heaven pretended, to deceive, to void
Each solemn tie, to plunder without bounds, 900
To curb the generous soul, to fool mankind ;
And, wild at last, to plunge into a sea
Of blood and horror. The returning light,
That first through Wickliff streaked the priestly
gloom,
Now burst in open day. Bared to the blaze,
Forth from the haunts of superstition crawled
Her motley sons, fantastic figures all ;
And, wide dispersed, their useless foetid wealth
In graceful labour bloomed, and fruits of peace.

Trade, joined to these, on every sea displayed 910
A daring canvas, poured with every tide
A golden flood. From other worlds were rolled
The guilty glittering stores, whose fatal charms,
By the plain Indian happily despised,
Yet worked his woe ; and to the blissful groves,
Where nature lived herself among her sons,
And innocence and joy for ever dwelt,
Drew rage unknown to pagan climes before,
The worst the zeal-inflamed barbarian drew.
Be no such horrid commerce, Britain, thine ! 920
But want for want, with mutual aid, supply.

The commons thus enriched, and powerful grown,
Against the barons weighed. Eliza then,
Amid these doubtful motions, steady, gave
The beam to fix. She, like the secret Eye,

That never closes on a guarded world,
So sought, so marked, so seized the public good,
That self-supported, without one ally,
She awed her inward, quelled her circling foes.

Inspired by me, beneath her sheltering arm, 930

In spite of raging universal sway

And raging seas repressed, the Belgic states,

My bulwark on the continent, arose.

Matchless in all the spirit of her days,

With confidence unbounded, fearless love

Elate, her fervent people waited gay,

Cheerful demanded the long threatened fleet,

And dashed the pride of Spain around their isle.

Nor ceased the British thunder here to rage :

The deep, reclaimed, obeyed its awful call ; 940

In fire and smoke Iberian ports involved,

The trembling foe even to the centre shook

Of their new conquered world, and, skulking, stole

By veering winds their Indian treasure home.

Meantime, peace, plenty, justice, science, arts,

With softer laurels crowned her happy reign.

As yet uncircumscribed the regal power,
And wild and vague prerogative remained ;
A wide voracious gulf, where swallowed oft
The helpless subject lay. This to reduce 950
To the just limit was my great effort.

By means that evil seem to narrow man,
Superior beings work their mystic will :
From storm and trouble thus a settled calm,
At last, effulgent, o'er Britannia smiled.

The gathering tempest, heaven-commissioned came,
Came in the prince, who, drunk with flattery, dreamt
His vain pacific counsels ruled the world ;
Though scorned abroad, bewildered in a maze

Of fruitless treaties ; while at home enslaved,
 And by a worthless crew insatiate drained,
 He lost his people's confidence and love :
 Irreparable loss ! whence crowns become
 An anxious burden. Years inglorious passed :
 Triumphant Spain the vengeful draught enjoyed :
 Abandoned Frederick pined, and Raleigh bled.
 But nothing that to these internal broils,
 That rancour, he began ; while lawless sway
 He, with his slavish doctors, tried to rear
 On metaphysic, on enchanted ground,
 And all the mazy quibbles of the schools :
 As if for one, and sometimes for the worst,
 Heaven had mankind in vengeance only made.
 Vain the pretence ! Not so the dire effect,
 The fierce, the foolish discord thence derived,
 That tears the country still, by party rage
 And ministerial clamour kept alive.
 In action weak, and for the wordy war
 Best fitted, faint this prince pursued his claim :
 Content to teach the subject herd, how great,
 How sacred he ; how despicable they !

960

970

980

But his unyielding son these doctrines drank,
 With all a bigot's rage ; (who never damps
 By reasoning his fire) and what they taught,
 Warm, and tenacious, into practice pushed.
 Senates, in vain, their kind restraint applied ;
 The more they struggled to support the laws,
 His justice-dreading ministers the more
 Drove him beyond their bounds. Tired with the
 check

Of faithful love, and with the flattery pleased
 Of false designing guilt, the fountain he
 Of public wisdom and of justice shut.
 Wide mourned the land. Straight to the voted aid
 Free, cordial, large, of never-failing source,

990

The illegal imposition followed harsh,
 With execration given, or ruthless squeezed
 From an insulted people, by a band
 Of the worst ruffians, those of tyrant power.
 Oppression walked at large, and poured abroad
 Her unrelenting train : informers, spies, 1000
 Bloodhounds, that sturdy freedom to the grave
 Pursue ; projectors of aggrieving schemes,
 Commerce to load for unprotected seas,
 To sell the starving many to the few,
 And drain a thousand ways the exhausted land.
 Even from that place, whence healing peace should
 flow,
 And Gospel truth, inhuman bigots shed
 Their poison round ; and on the venal bench,
 Instead of justice, party held the scale,
 And violence the sword. Afflicted years, 1010
 Too patient, felt at last their vengeance full.

Mid the low murmurs of submissive fear
 And mingled rage, my Hampden raised his voice,
 And to the laws appealed ; the laws no more
 In judgment sat, behoved some other ear.
 When instant from the keen resentive north,
 By long oppression, by religion roused,
 The guardian army came. Beneath its wing
 Was called, though meant to furnish hostile aid,
 The more than Roman senate. There a flame 1020
 Broke out, that cleared, consumed, renewed the land.
 In deep emotion hurled, nor Greece, nor Rome,
 Indignant bursting from a tyrant's chain,
 While, full of me, each agitated soul
 Strung every nerve and flamed in every eye,
 Had e'er beheld such light and heat combined ;
 Such heads and hearts ; such dreadful zeal, led on
 By calm majestic wisdom, taught its course
 What nuisance to devour ; such wisdom fired

With unabating zeal, and aimed sincere
To clear the weedy state, restore the laws,
And for the future to secure their sway.

1030

This then the purpose of my mildest sons.
But man is blind. A nation once inflamed
(Chief, should the breath of factious fury blow,
With the wild rage of mad enthusiast swelled)
Not easy cools again. From breast to breast,
From eye to eye, the kindling passions mix
In heightened blaze; and, ever wise and just,
High heaven to gracious ends directs the storm. 1040
Thus in one conflagration Britain wrapped,
And by confusion's lawless sons despoiled,
King, Lords, and Commons, thundering to the ground,
Successive, rushed—Lo! from their ashes rose,
Gay beaming radiant youth, the Phoenix State.

The grievous yoke of vassalage, the yoke
Of private life, lay by those flames dissolved;
And, from the wasteful, the luxurious king,
Was purchased that which taught the young to bend.
Stronger restored, the Commons taxed the whole, 1050
And built on that eternal rock their power.
The crown, of its hereditary wealth
Despoiled, on senates more dependent grew,
And they more frequent, more assured. Yet lived,
And in full vigour spread that bitter root,
The passive doctrines, by their patrons first,
Opposed ferocious, when they touch themselves.

This wild delusive cant; the rash cabal
Of hungry courtiers, ravenous for prey;
The bigot, restless in a double chain
To bind anew the land; the constant need
Of finding faithless means, of shifting forms,
And flattering senates, to supply his waste;

1060

These tore some moments from the careless prince,
 And in his breast awaked the kindred plan.
 By dangerous softness long he mined his way ;
 By subtle arts, dissimulation deep ;
 By sharing what corruption showered, profuse ;
 By breathing wide the gay licentious plague,
 And pleasing manners, fitted to deceive.

1070

At last subsided the delirious joy,
 On whose high billow, from the saintly reign,
 The nation drove too far. A pensioned king,
 Against his country bribed by Gallic gold ;
 The port pernicious sold, the Scylla since
 And fell Charybdis of the British seas ;
 Freedom attacked abroad, with surer blow
 To cut it off at home ; the saviour league
 Of Europe broke ; the progress even advanced
 Of universal sway, which to reduce
 Such seas of blood and treasure Britain cost ;
 The millions, by a generous people given,
 Or squandered vile, or to corrupt, disgrace,
 And awe the land with forces not their own,
 Employed ; the darling Church herself betrayed ;
 All these, broad glaring, oped the general eye
 And waked my spirit, the resisting soul.

1080

Mild was, at first, and half ashamed, the check
 Of senates, shook from the fantastic dream
 Of absolute submission, tenets vile,
 Which slaves would blush to own, and which, reduced
 To practice, always, honest nature shock.
 Not even the mask removed, and the fierce front
 Of tyranny disclosed ; nor trampled laws ;
 Nor seized each badge of freedom through the land ;
 Nor Sidney bleeding for the unpublished page ;
 Nor on the bench avowed corruption placed,
 And murderous rage itself, in Jefferies' form ;

1090

Nor endless acts of arbitrary power,
Cruel, and false, could raise the public arm. 1100
Distrustful, scattered, of combining chiefs
Devoid and dreading blind rapacious war,
The patient public turns not, till impelled
To the near verge of ruin. Hence I roused
The bigot king, and hurried fated on
His measures immature. But chief his zeal,
Out-flaming Rome herself, portentous scared
The troubled nation : Mary's horrid days
To fancy bleeding rose, and the dire glare
Of Smithfield lightened in its eyes anew. 1110
Yet silence reigned. Each on another scowled
Rueful amazement, pressing down his rage ;
As, mustering vengeance, the deep thunder frowns,
Awfully still, waiting the high command
To spring. Straight from his country, Europe,
 saved
To save Britannia, lo ! my darling son,
Than hero more, the patriot of mankind,
Immortal Nassau came. I hushed the deep
By demons roused, and bade the listed winds,
Still shifting as behoved, with various breath, 1120
Waft the deliverer to the longing shore.
See ! wide alive, the foaming channel, bright
With swelling sails, and all the pride of war,
Delightful view ! when justice draws the sword :
And mark, diffusing ardent soul around,
And sweet contempt of death, my streaming flag,
Even adverse navies blessed the binding gale,
Kept down the glad acclaim, and silent joyed.
Arrived, the pomp, and not the waste of arms
His progress marked. The faint opposing host 1130
For once, in yielding their best victory found,
And by desertion proved exalted faith :
While his the bloodless conquest of the heart,
Shouts without groan, and triumph without war.

Then dawned the period destined to confine
 The surge of wild prerogative, to raise
 A mound restraining its imperious rage,
 And bid the raving deep no farther flow.
 Nor were, without that fence, the swallowed state
 Better than Belgian plains without their dykes, 1140
 Sustaining weighty seas. This, often saved
 By more than human hand, the public saw,
 And seized the white-winged moment. Pleased to
 yield¹

Destructive power, a wise heroic prince
 Even lent his aid. Thrice happy, did they know
 Their happiness, Britannia's bounded kings.
 What though not theirs the boast, in dungeon glooms,
 To plunge bold freedom ; or, to cheerless wilds,
 To drive him from the cordial face of friend ;
 Or fierce to strike him at the midnight hour, 1150
 By mandate blind, not justice, that delights
 To dare the keenest eye of open day ?
 What though no glory to control the laws,
 And make injurious will their only rule,
 They deem it ? What though, tools of wanton power,
 Pestiferous armies swarm not at their call ?
 What though they give not a relentless crew
 Of civil furies, proud oppression's fangs
 To tear at pleasure the dejected land,
 With starving labour pampering idle waste ? 1160
 To clothe the naked, feed the hungry, wipe
 The guiltless tear from lone affliction's eye ;
 To raise hid merit, set the alluring light
 Of virtue high to view ; to nourish arts,
 Direct the thunder of an injured state,
 Make a whole glorious people sing for joy,
 Bless humankind, and through the downward depth
 Of future times to spread that better sun
 Which lights up British soul : for deeds like these,
 The dazzling fair career unbounded lies ; 1170

While (still superior bliss) the dark abrupt
Is kindly barred, the precipice of ill.
Oh luxury divine ! Oh poor to this,
Ye giddy glories of despotic thrones !
By this, by this indeed, is imaged heaven,
By boundless good without the power of ill.

And now behold ! exalted as the cope
That swells immense o'er many-peopled earth,
And like it free, my fabric stands complete,
The palace of the laws. To the four heavens 1180
Four gates impartial thrown, unceasing crowds,
With kings themselves the hearty peasant mixed,
Pour urgent in. And though to different ranks
Responsive place belongs, yet equal spreads
The sheltering roof o'er all ; while plenty flows,
And glad contentment echoes round the whole.
Ye floods, descend ! Ye winds, confirming, blow !
Nor outward tempest, nor corrosive time,
Nought but the felon undermining hand
Of dark corruption, can its frame dissolve, 1190
And lay the toil of ages in the dust.'

LIBERTY: PART V

I THE PROSPECT

CONTENTS

THE author addresses the goddess of Liberty, marking the happiness and grandeur of Great Britain, as arising from her influence, to verse 88. She resumes her discourse, and points out the chief virtues which are necessary to maintain her establishment there, to verse 374. Recommends, as its last ornament and finishing, sciences, fine arts, and public works; the encouragement of these urged from the example of France, though under a despotic government, to verse 549. The whole concludes with a prospect of future times, given by the goddess of Liberty: this described by the author, as it passes in vision before him.

HERE interposing, as the goddess paused :—
' O blest Britannia, in thy presence blest,
Thou guardian of mankind ! Whence spring, alone,
All human grandeur, happiness, and fame ;
For toil, by thee protected, feels no pain ;
The poor man's lot with milk and honey flows ;
And, gilded with thy rays, even death looks gay.
Let other lands the potent blessings boast
Of more exalting suns. Let Asia's woods,
Untended, yield the vegetable fleece ; 10
And let the little insect-artist form,
On higher life intent, its silken tomb.
Let wondering rocks, in radiant birth, disclose
The various tinctured children of the sun.
From the prone beam let more delicious fruits
A flavour drink, that in one piercing taste
Bids each combine. Let Gallic vineyards burst

With floods of joy ; with mild balsamic juice
 The Tuscan olive. Let Arabia breathe
 Her spicy gales, her vital gums distil. 20

Turbid with gold, let southern rivers flow ;
 And orient floods draw soft, o'er pearls, their maze.
 Let Afric vaunt her treasures ; let Peru
 Deep in her bowels her own ruin breed,
 The yellow traitor that her bliss betrayed—
 Unequalled bliss—and to unequalled rage !
 Yet nor the gorgeous East, nor golden South,
 Nor, in full prime, that new discovered world,
 Where flames the falling day, in wealth and praise,
 Shall with Britannia vie ; while, goddess, she 30
 Derives her praise from thee, her matchless charms.
 Her hearty fruits the hand of freedom own ;
 And, warm with culture, her thick clustering fields
 Prolific teem. Eternal verdure crowns
 Her meads ; her gardens smile eternal spring.
 She gives the hunter-horse, unquelled by toil,
 Ardent, to rush into the rapid chase.
 She, whitening o'er her downs, diffusive, pours
 Unnumbered flocks. She weaves the fleecy robe
 That wraps the nations. She, to lusty droves, 40
 The richest pasture spreads ; and, hers, deep-wave
 Autumnal seas of pleasing plenty round.
 These her delights ; and by no baneful herb,
 No darting tiger, no grim lion's glare,
 No fierce-descending wolf, no serpent rolled
 In spires immense progressive o'er the land,
 Disturbed. Enlivening these, add cities, full
 Of wealth, of trade, of cheerful toiling crowds.
 Add thriving towns ; add villages and farms,
 Innumerable sowed along the lively vale, 50
 Where bold unrivalled peasants happy dwell.
 Add ancients seats, with venerable oaks
 Embosomed high, while kindred floods below
 Wind through the mead ; and those of modern hand

More pompous, add, that splendid shine afar.
 Need I her limpid lakes, her rivers name,
 Where swarm the finny race ? Thee, chief, Oh Thames !
 On whose each tide, glad with returning sails,
 Flows in the mingled harvest of mankind ?
 And thee, thou Severn, whose prodigious swell, 60
 And waves, resounding, imitate the main ?
 Why need I name her deep capacious ports,
 That point around the world ; and why her seas ?
 All ocean is her own, and every land
 To whom her ruling thunder ocean bears.
 She too the mineral feeds : the obedient lead,
 The warlike iron, nor the peaceful less,
 Forming of life art-civilized the bond ;
 And that the Tyrian merchant sought of old,
 Not dreaming then of Britain's brighter fame. 70
 She rears to freedom an undaunted race :
 Compatriot zealous, hospitable, kind,
 Hers the warm Cambrian : hers the lofty Scot,
 To hardship tamed, active in arts and arms,
 Fired with a restless, an impatient flame,
 That leads him raptured where ambition calls :
 And English merit hers ; where meet, combined,
 Whate'er high fancy, sound judicious thought,
 An ample generous heart, undrooping soul,
 And firm tenacious valour can bestow. 80
 Great nurse of fruits, of flocks, of commerce, she ;
 Great nurse of men ! By thee, Oh goddess, taught,
 Her old renown I trace, disclose her source
 Of wealth, of grandeur ; and to Britons sing
 A strain the muses never touched before.

But how shall this thy mighty kingdom stand,
 On what unyielding base, how finished shine ? '

At this her eye, collecting all its fire,
 Beamed more than human ; and her awful voice,
 Majestic thus she raised : ' To Britons bear 90

This closing strain, and with intenser note
 Loud let it sound in their awakened ear :

On virtue can alone my kingdom stand,
 On public virtue, every virtue joined.
 For, lost this social cement of mankind,
 The greatest empires, by scarce-felt degrees,
 Will moulder soft away ; till, tottering loose,
 They, prone at last, to total ruin rush.
 Unblessed by virtue, government a league
 Becomes, a circling junto of the great, 100
 To rob by law ; religion mild, a yoke
 To tame the stooping soul, a trick of state
 To mask their rapine, and to share the prey.
 What are, without it, senates, save a face
 Of consultation deep and reason free,
 While the determined voice and heart are sold ?
 What boasted freedom, save a sounding name ?
 And what election, but a market vile
 Of slaves self-bartered ? Virtue ! without thee,
 There is no ruling eye, no nerve, in states ; 110
 War has no vigour, and no safety peace ;
 Even justice warps to party, laws oppress,
 Wide through the land their weak protection fails,
 First broke the balance, and then scorned the sword.
 Thus nations sink, society dissolves ;
 Rapine and guile and violence break loose,
 Everting life, and turning love to gall.
 Man hates the face of man, and Indian woods
 And Libya's hissing sands to him are tame.

By those three virtues be the frame sustained 120
 Of British freedom : independent life ;
 Integrity in office ; and, o'er all
 Supreme, a passion for the commonweal.

Hail, independence, hail ! heaven's next best gift,
 To that of life and an immortal soul.

The life of life, that to the banquet high
And sober meal gives taste ; to the bowed roof
Fair-dreamed repose, and to the cottage charms.
Of public freedom, hail, thou secret source,
Whose streams, from every quarter confluent, form 130
My better Nile, that nurses human life.
By rills from thee deduced, irriguous, fed,
The private field looks gay, with nature's wealth
Abundant flows, and blooms with each delight
That nature craves. Its happy master there,
The only freeman, walks his pleasing round :
Sweet-featured peace attending ; fearless truth ;
Firm resolution ; goodness, blessing all
That can rejoice ; contentment, surest friend ;
And, still fresh stores from nature's book derived, 140
Philosophy, companion ever new.
These cheer his rural, and sustain or fire,
When into action called, his busy hours.
Meantime true judging moderate desires,
Economy and taste, combined, direct
His clear affairs, and from debauching fiends
Secure his little kingdom. Nor can those
Whom fortune heaps, without these virtues, reach
That truce with pain, that animated ease,
That self-enjoyment springing from within, 150
That independence, active or retired,
Which make the soundest bliss of man below :
But, lost beneath the rubbish of their means,
And drained by wants to nature all unknown,
A wandering, tasteless, gaily wretched train,
Though rich, are beggars, and though noble, slaves.

Lo ! damned to wealth, at what a gross expense
They purchase disappointment, pain, and shame.
Instead of hearty hospitable cheer,
See how the hall with brutal riot flows ; 160

While in the foaming flood, fermenting, steeped,
 The country maddens into party rage.
 Mark those disgraceful piles of wood and stone ;
 Those parks and gardens, where, his haunts betrimmed,
 And nature by presumptuous art oppressed,
 The woodland genius mourns. See the full board
 That steams disgust, and bowls that give no joy ;
 No truth invited there, to feed the mind ;
 Nor wit, the wine-rejoicing reason quaffs.

Hark how the dome with insolence resounds, 170
 With those retained by vanity to scare
 Repose and friends. To tyrant fashion, mark
 The costly worship paid, to the broad gaze
 Of fools. From still delusive day to day,
 Led an eternal round of lying hope,
 See, self-abandoned, how they roam adrift
 Dashed o'er the town, a miserable wreck !

Then to adore some warbling eunuch turned,
 With Midas' ears they crowd ; or to the buzz
 Of masquerade unblushing ; or, to show 180
 Their scorn of nature, at the tragic scene
 They mirthful sit, or prove the comic true.
 But, chief, behold around the rattling board
 The civil robbers ranged ; and even the fair,
 The tender fair, each sweetness laid aside,
 As fierce for plunder as all-licensed troops
 In some sacked city. Thus dissolved their wealth,
 Without one generous luxury dissolved,
 Or quartered on it many a needless want,
 At the thronged levee bends the venal tribe ; 190
 With fair but faithless smiles each varnished o'er,
 Each smooth as those that mutually deceive,
 And for their falsehood each despising each ;
 Till shook their patron by the wintry winds,
 Wide flies the withered shower, and leaves him bare.
 O far superior Afric's sable sons,
 By merchant pilfered, to these willing slaves ;

And rich, as unsqueezed favourite, to them,
Is he who can his virtue boast alone.

Britons, be firm !—nor let corruption sly
Twine round your heart indissoluble chains.
The steel of Brutus burst the grosser bonds
By Cæsar cast o'er Rome ; but still remained
The soft enchanting fetters of the mind,
And other Cæsars rose. Determined, hold
Your independence ; for, that once destroyed,
Unfounded, freedom is a morning dream,
That flits aerial from the spreading eye.

200

Forbid it, heaven, that ever I need urge
Integrity in office on my sons.
Inculcate common honour—not to rob—
And whom ?—the gracious, the confiding hand,
That lavishly rewards ; the toiling poor,
Whose cup with many a bitter drop is mixed ;
The guardian public ; every face they see,
And every friend ; nay, in effect themselves ?
As in familiar life, the villain's fate
Admits no cure ; so, when a desperate age
At this arrives, I the devoted race
Indignant spurn, and hopeless soar away.

210

But, ah too little known to modern times,
Be not the noblest passion passed unsung ;
That ray peculiar, from unbounded love
Effused, which kindles the heroic soul,
Devotion to the public. Glorious flame,
Celestial ardour ! in what unknown worlds
Profusely scattered through the blue immense,
Hast thou been blessing myriads, since in Rome,
Old virtuous Rome, so many deathless names
From thee their lustre drew ; since, taught by thee, 230
Their poverty put splendour to the blush,

Pain grew luxurious, and even death delight ?
 O wilt thou ne'er, in thy long period, look,
 With blaze direct, on this my last retreat ?

'Tis not enough from self right understood
 Reflected, that thy rays inflame the heart :
 Though virtue not disdains appeals to self,
 Dreads not the trial ; all her joys are true,
 Nor is there any real joy save hers.

Far less the tepid, the declaiming race,
 Foes to corruption, to its wages friends,
 Or those whom private passions, for a while,
 Beneath my standard list ; can they suffice
 To raise and fix the glory of my reign ?
 An active flood of universal love
 Must swell the breast. First, in effusion wide,
 The restless spirit roves creation round,
 And seizes every being : stronger then
 It tends to life, whate'er the kindred search
 Of bliss allies : then, more collected still,
 It urges human kind ; a passion grown,
 At last, the central parent public calls
 Its utmost effort forth, awakes each sense,
 The comely, grand, and tender. Without this,
 This awful pant, shook from sublimer powers
 Than those of self, this heaven-infused delight,
 This moral gravitation, rushing prone
 To press the public good, my system soon,
 Traverse, to several selfish centres drawn,
 Will reel to ruin : while for ever shut
 Stand the bright portals of desponding fame.

240

250

260

From sordid self shoot up no shining deeds,
 None of those ancient lights, that gladden earth,
 Give grace to being, and arouse the brave
 To just ambition, virtue's quickening fire.
 Life tedious grows, an idly bustling round,

Filled up with actions animal and mean ;
A dull gazette. The impatient reader scorns
The poor historic page ; till kindly comes
Oblivion, and redeems a people's shame. 270
Not so the times when, emulation-stung,
Greece shone in genius, science, and in arts,
And Rome in virtues dreadful to be told.
To live was glory then ; and charmed mankind,
Through the deep periods of devolving time,
Those, raptured, copy ; these, astonished, read.

True, a corrupted state, with every vice
And every meanness foul, this passion damps.
Who can, unshocked, behold the cruel eye ;
The pale inveigling smile ; the ruffian front ; 280
The wretch abandoned to relentless self,
Equally vile if miser or profuse ;
Powers not of God, assiduous to corrupt ;
The fell deputed tyrant, who devours
The poor and weak, at distance from redress ;
Delirious faction bellowing loud my name ;
The false fair-seeming patriot's hollow boast ;
A race resolved on bondage, fierce for chains,
My sacred right a merchandise alone
Esteeming, and to work their feeder's will 290
By deeds, a horror to mankind, prepared,
As were the dregs of Romulus of old ?
Who these indeed can undetesting see,
But who unpitying ? To the generous eye
Distress is virtue ; and, though self-betrayed,
A people struggling with their fate must rouse
The hero's throb. Nor can a land, at once,
Be lost to virtue quite. How glorious then,
Fit luxury for gods, to save the good,
Protect the feeble, dash bold vice aside,
Depress the wicked, and restore the frail. 300
Posterity, besides—the young are pure,

And sons may tinge their father's cheek with shame.

Should then the times arrive (which heaven avert !) That Britons bend unnerved, not by force Of arms, more generous and more manly, quelled, But by corruption's soul-dejecting arts, Arts impudent and gross, by their own gold, In part bestowed, to bribe them to give all ; With party raging, or immersed in sloth, 310 Should they Britannia's well-fought laurels yield To slyly conquering Gaul ; even from her brow Let her own naval oak be basely torn, By such as tremble at the stiffening gale, And nerveless sink while others rejoiced. Or (darker prospect, scarce one gleam behind Disclosing) should the broad corruptive plague Breathe from the city to the farthest hut, That sits serene within the forest shade, The fevered people fire, inflame their wants, 320 And their luxurious thirst, so gathering rage, That, were a buyer found, they stand prepared To sell their birthright for a cooling draught. Should shameless pens for plain corruption plead ; The hired assassins of the commonweal ! Deemed the declaiming rant of Greece and Rome, Should public virtue grow the public scoff, Till private, failing, staggers through the land : Till round the city loose mechanic want, Dire-prowling nightly, makes the cheerful haunts 330 Of men more hideous than Numidian wilds, Nor from its fury sleeps the vale in peace ; And murders, horrors, perjuries abound : Nay, till to lowest deeds the highest stoop ; The rich, like starving wretches, thirst for gold ; And those, on whom the vernal showers of heaven All-bounteous fall, and that prime lot bestow, A power to live to nature and themselves,

In sick attendance wear their anxious days,
 With fortune, joyless, and with honours, mean. 340
 Meantime, perhaps, profusion flows around,
 The waste of war, without the works of peace ;
 No mark of millions in the gulf absorbed
 Of uncreating vice ; none but the rage
 Of roused corruption still demanding more.
 That very portion, which (by faithful skill
 Employed) might make the smiling public rear
 Her ornamental head, drilled through the hands
 Of mercenary tools, serves but to nurse
 A locust band within, and in the bud 350
 Leaves starved each work of dignity and use.

I paint the worst. But should these times arrive,
 If any nobler passion yet remain,
 Let all my sons all parties fling aside,
 Despise their nonsense, and together join ;
 Let worth and virtue scorning low despair,
 Exerted full, from every quarter shine,
 Commixed in heightened blaze. Light flashed to light,
 Moral, or intellectual, more intense
 By giving glows. As on pure winter's eve, 360
 Gradual, the stars effulge ; fainter, at first,
 They, straggling, rise ; but when the radiant host,
 In thick profusion poured, shine out immense,
 Each casting vivid influence on each,
 From pole to pole a glittering deluge plays,
 And worlds above rejoice, and men below.

But why to Britons this superfluous strain ?
 Good nature, honest truth even somewhat blunt,
 Of crooked baseness an indignant scorn,
 A zeal unyielding in their country's cause, 370
 And ready bounty, wont to dwell with them—
 Nor only wont—wide o'er the land diffused,
 In many a blest retirement still they dwell.

To softer prospect turn we now the view ;
 To laurelled science, arts, and public works,
 That lend my finished fabric comely pride,
 Grandeur and grace. Of sullen genius he,
 Cursed by the muses, by the graces loathed,
 Who deems beneath the public's high regard
 These last enlivening touches of my reign. 380

However puffed with power and gorged with wealth
 A nation be, let trade enormous rise,
 Let east and south their mingled treasure pour,
 Till, swelled impetuous, the corrupting flood
 Burst o'er the city and devour the land.
 Yet these neglected, these recording arts,
 Wealth rots, a nuisance ; and, oblivious sunk,
 That nation must another Carthage lie.
 If not by them, on monumental brass,
 On sculptured marble, on the deathless page 390
 Impressed, renown had left no trace behind :
 In vain, to future times, the sage had thought,
 The legislator planned, the hero found
 A beauteous death, the patriot toiled in vain.
 The awarders they of fame's immortal wreath,
 They rouse ambition, they the mind exalt,
 Give great ideas, lovely forms infuse,
 Delight the general eye, and, dressed by them,
 The moral Venus glows with double charms.

Science, my close associate, still attends
 Where'er I go. Sometimes, in simple guise,
 She walks the furrow with the consul-swain ;
 Whispering unlettered wisdom to the heart
 Direct ; or, sometimes in the pompous robe
 Of fancy dressed, she charms Athenian wits,
 And a whole sapient city round her burns.
 Then o'er her brow Minerva's terrors nod :
 With Xenophon, sometimes, in dire extremes,
 She breathes deliberate soul, and makes retreat 400

Unequalled glory ; with the Theban sage 410
 Epaminondas, first and best of men,
 Sometimes she bids the deep-embattled host,
 Above the vulgar reach, resistless formed,
 March to sure conquest—never gained before.
 Nor on the treacherous seas of giddy state
 Unskilful she : when the triumphant tide
 Of high-swoln empire wears one boundless smile,
 And the gale tempts to new pursuits of fame,
 Sometimes, with Scipio, she collects her sail,
 And seeks the blissful shore of rural ease, 420
 Where, but the Aonian maids, no sirens sing ;
 Or, should the deep-brewed tempest muttering rise,
 While rocks and shoals perfidious lurk around,
 With Tully she her wide-reviving light
 To senates holds, a Cataline confounds,
 And saves awhile from Cæsar sinking Rome.
 Such the kind power, whose piercing eye dissolves
 Each mental fetter, and sets reason free ;
 For me inspiring an enlightened zeal,
 The more tenacious as the more convinced 430
 How happy freemen, and how wretched slaves.
 To Britons not unknown, to Britons full
 The goddess spreads her stores, the secret soul
 That quickens trade, the breath unseen that wafts
 To them the treasures of a balanced world.
 But finer arts (save what the muse has sung
 In daring flight, above all modern wing)
 Neglected droop the head, and public works,
 Broke by eruption into private gain,
 Not ornament, disgrace ; not serve, destroy. 440

Shall Britons, by their own joint wisdom ruled
 Beneath one royal head, whose vital power
 Connects, enlivens, and exerts the whole ;
 In finer arts and public works shall they
 To Gallia yield : yield to a land that bends,

Depressed and broke, beneath the will of one ?
 Of one who, should the unkingly thirst of gold,
 Or tyrant passions, or ambition, prompt,
 Calls locust-armies o'er the blasted land :
 Drains from its thirsty bounds the springs of wealth, 450
 His own insatiate reservoir to fill :
 To the lone desert patriot-merit frowns,
 Or into dungeons arts, when they, their chains,
 Indignant, bursting, for their nobler works
 All other license scorn but truth's and mine.
 Oh ! shame to think, shall Britons, in the field
 Unconquered still, the better laurel lose ?
 Even in that monarch's reign, who vainly dreamt,
 By giddy power betrayed and flattered pride,
 To grasp unbounded sway ; while, swarming round, 460
 His armies dared all Europe to the field ;
 To hostile hands while treasure flowed profuse,
 And, that great source of treasure, subjects' blood
 Inhuman squandered, sickened every land ;
 From Britain, chief, while my superior sons,
 In vengeance rushing, dashed his idle hopes,
 And bade his agonising heart be low :
 Even then, as in the golden calm of peace,
 What public works, at home, what arts arose ;
 What various science shone ; what genius glowed. 470

'Tis not for me to paint, diffusive shot
 O'er fair extents of land, the shining road ;
 The flood-compelling arch ; the long canal
 Through mountains piercing and uniting seas ;
 The dome resounding sweet with infant joy,
 From famine saved, or cruel-handed shame ;
 And that where valour counts his noble scars ;
 The land where social pleasure loves to dwell,
 Of the fierce demon, Gothic duel, freed ;
 The robber from his farthest forest chased ; 480
 The turbid city cleared, and, by degrees,

Into sure peace, the best police, refined,
Magnificence, and grace, and decent joy.
Let Gallic bards record how honoured arts
And science, by despotic bounty blessed,
At distance flourished from my parent-eye.
Restoring ancient taste, how Boileau rose :
How the big Roman soul shook, in Corneille,
The trembling stage. In elegant Racine,
How the more powerful though more humble voice 490
Of nature-painting Greece, resistless, breathed
The whole awakened heart. How Molière's scene,
Chastised and regular, with well judged wit,
Not scattered wild, and native humour graced,
Was life itself. To public honours raised,
How learning in warm seminaries spread ;
And, more for glory than the small reward,
How emulation strove. How their pure tongue
Almost obtained what was denied their arms.
From Rome, awhile, how painting, courted long, 500
With Poussin came ; ancient design, that lifts
A fairer front, and looks another soul.
How the kind art, that, of unvalued price,
The famed and only picture easy gives,
Refined her touch, and, through the shadowed piece,
All the live spirit of the painter poured.
Coyest of arts, how sculpture northward deigned
A look, and bade her Girardon arise.
How lavish grandeur blazed ; the barren waste,
Astonished, saw the sudden palace swell, 510
And fountains spout amid its arid shades.
For leagues, bright vistas opening to the view,
How forests in majestic gardens smiled.
How menial arts, by their gay sisters taught,
Wove the deep flower, the blooming foliage trained
In joyous figures o'er the silky lawn,
The palace cheered, illumed the storied wall,
And with the pencil vied the glowing loom.

These laurels, Lewis, by the droppings raised
 Of thy profusion, its dishonour shade, 520
 And, green through future times, shall bind thy brow ;
 While the vain honours of perfidious war
 Wither abhorred, or in oblivion lost.
 With what prevailing vigour had they shot,
 And stole a deeper root, by the full tide
 Of war-sunk millions fed ? Superior still,
 How had they branched luxuriant to the skies,
 In Britain planted by the potent juice
 Of freedom swelled ? Forced is the bloom of arts,
 A false uncertain spring, when bounty gives, 530
 Weak without me, a transitory gleam.
 Fair shine the slippery days, enticing skies
 Of favour smile, and courtly breezes blow ;
 Till arts, betrayed, trust to the flattering air
 Their tender blossom. Then malignant rise
 The blights of envy, of those insect clouds
 That, blasting merit, often cover courts :
 Nay, should, perchance, some kind Mæcenas aid
 The doubtful beamings of his prince's soul,
 His wavering ardour fix, and unconfined 540
 Diffuse his warm beneficence around ;
 Yet death, at last, and wintry tyrants come,
 Each spring of genius killing at the root.
 But when with me imperial bounty joins,
 Wide o'er the public blows eternal spring ;
 While mingled autumn every harvest pours
 Of every land ; whate'er invention, art,
 Creating toil, and nature can produce.'

Here ceased the goddess ; and her ardent wings,
 Dipped in the colours of the heavenly bow, 550
 Stood waving radiance round, for sudden flight
 Prepared, when thus impatient, burst my prayer :

' Oh forming light of life ! Oh, better sun !
 Sun of mankind ! by whom the cloudy north,

Sublimed, not envies Languedocian skies,
 That, unstained ether all, diffusive smile :
 When shall we call these ancient laurels ours ?
 And when thy work complete ?' Straight with her
 hand,

Celestial red, she touched my darkened eyes.
 As at the touch of day the shades dissolve, 560
 So quick, methought, the misty circle cleared,
 That dims the dawn of being here below :
 The future shone disclosed, and, in long view,
 Bright rising eras instant rushed to light.

'They come ! great goddess ! I the times behold !
 The times our fathers, in the bloody field,
 Have earned so dear, and, not with less renown,
 In the warm struggles of the senate fight.
 The times I see ! whose glory to supply,
 For toiling ages, commerce round the world 570
 Has winged unnumbered sails, and from each land
 Materials heaped, that, well employed, with Rome
 Might vie our grandeur, and with Greece our art.

Lo ! princes I behold, contriving still,
 And still conducting firm some brave design ;
 Kings ! that the narrow joyless circle scorn,
 Burst the blockade of false designing men,
 Of treacherous smiles, of adulation fell,
 And of the blinding clouds around them thrown :
 Their court rejoicing millions ; worth, alone, 580
 And virtue dear to them ; their best delight,
 In just proportion, to give general joy ;
 Their jealous care thy kingdom to maintain ;
 The public glory theirs ; unsparing love
 Their endless treasure, and their deeds their praise.
 With thee they work. Nought can resist your force.
 Life feels it quickening in her dark retreats :
 Strong spread the blooms of genius, science, art ;

His bashful bounds disclosing merit breaks ;
 And, big with fruits of glory, virtue blows
 Expansive o'er the land. Another race
 Of generous youth, of patriot sires, I see.
 Not those vain insects fluttering in the blaze
 Of court, and ball, and play ; those venal souls,
 Corruption's veteran unrelenting bands,
 That, to their vices slaves, can ne'er be free.

I see the fountains purged, whence life derives
 A clear or turbid flow ; see the young mind
 Not fed impure by chance, by flattery fooled,
 Or by scholastic jargon bloated proud,
 But filled and nourished by the light of truth.
 Then, beamed through fancy the refining ray,
 And pouring on the heart, the passions feel
 At once informing light and moving flame ;
 Till moral, public, graceful action crowns
 The whole. Behold ! the fair contention glows,
 In all that mind or body can adorn,
 And form to life. Instead of barren heads,
 Barbarian pedants. wrangling sons of pride,
 And truth-perplexing metaphysic wits,
 Men, patriots, chiefs, and citizens are formed.

Lo ! justice, like the liberal light of heaven,
 Unpurchased shines on all ; and from her beam,
 Appalling guilt, retire the savage crew
 That prowl amid the darkness they themselves
 Have thrown around the laws. Oppression grieves ;
 See how her legal furies bite the lip,
 While Yorkes and Talbots their deep snares detect,
 And seize swift justice through the clouds they raise.

See, social labour lifts his guarded head,
 And men not yield to government in vain.
 From the sure land is rooted ruffian force,

590

600

610

620

And the lewd nurse of villains, idle waste ;
 Lo ! razed their haunts, down dashed their maddening
 bowl,

A nation's poison ! Beauteous order reigns,
 Manly submission, unimposing toil,
 Trade without guile, civility that marks
 From the foul herd of brutal slaves, thy sons,
 And fearless peace. Or should affronting war
 To slow but dreadful vengeance rouse the just, 630
 Unfailing fields of freemen I behold.

That know, with their own proper arm, to guard
 Their own blest isle against a leaguing world.
 Despairing Gaul her boiling youth restrains,
 Dissolved her dream of universal sway :
 The winds and seas are Britain's wide domain ;
 And not as sail, but by permission, spreads.

Lo ! swarming southward on rejoicing suns
 Gay colonies extend ; the calm retreat
 Of undeserved distress, the better home 640
 Of those whom bigots chase from foreign lands.
 Not built on rapine servitude and woe,
 And in their turn some petty tyrant's prey,
 But, bound by social freedom, firm they rise ;
 Such as, of late, an Oglethorpe has formed,
 And, crowding round, the charmed Savannah sees.

Horrid with want and misery, no more
 Our streets the tender passenger afflict.
 Nor shivering age ; nor sickness without friend,
 Or home, or bed to bear his burning load ; 650
 Nor agonizing infant, that ne'er earned
 Its guiltless pangs, I see ! The stores, profuse,
 Which British bounty has to thee assigned,
 No more the sacrilegious riot swell
 Of cannibal devourers, right applied.
 No starving wretch the land of freedom stains :

If poor, employment finds ; if old, demands,
 If sick, if maimed, his miserable due ;
 And will, if young, repay the fondest care.
 Sweet sets the sun of stormy life ; and sweet 660
 The morning shines, in mercy's dews arrayed.
 Lo ! how they rise, these families of heaven,
 That chief (but why, ye bigots ! why so late ?)
 Where blooms and warbles glad a rising age ;
 What smiles of praise ! and, while their song ascends,
 The listening seraph lays his lute aside.

Hark ! the gay muses raise a nobler strain,
 With active nature, warm impassioned truth,
 Engaging fable, lucid order, notes
 Of various string, and heart-felt image filled. 670
 Behold ! I see the dread delightful school
 Of tempered passions, and of polished life,
 Restored. Behold ! the well dissembled scene
 Calls from embellished eyes the lovely tear,
 Or lights up mirth in modest cheeks again.
 Lo ! vanished monster-land. Lo ! driven away
 Those that Apollo's sacred walks profane :
 Their wild creation scattered, where a world
 Unknown to nature, chaos more confused,
 O'er the brute scene its ouran-outangs pours ; 680
 Detested forms ! that, on the mind impressed,
 Corrupt, confound, and barbarize an age.

Behold ! all thine again the sister arts,
 Thy graces they, knit in harmonious dance.
 Nursed by the treasure from a nation drained
 Their works to purchase, they to nobler rouse
 Their untamed genius, their unfettered thought ;
 Of pompous tyrants, and of dreaming monks,
 The gaudy tools, and prisoners, no more.

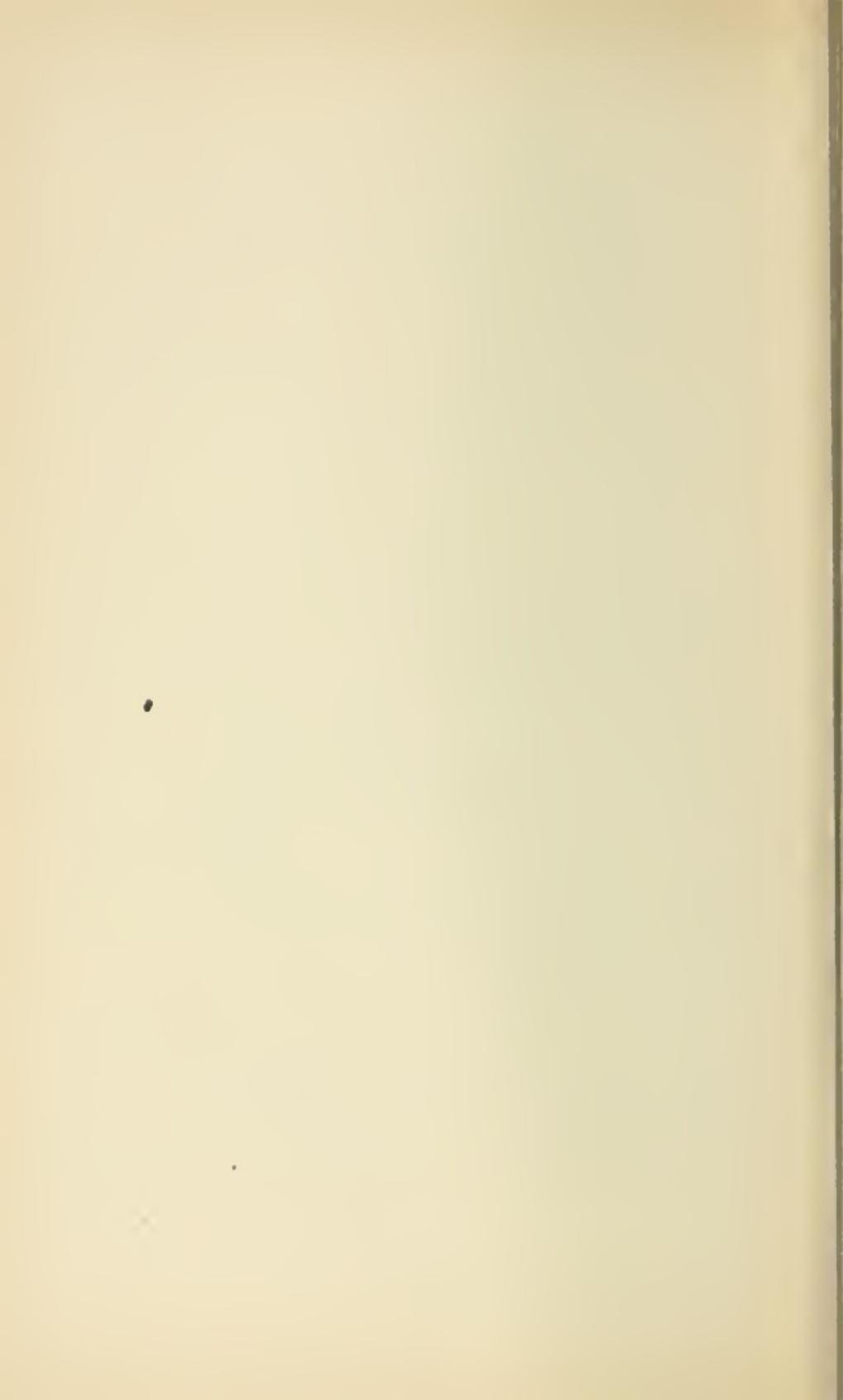
Lo ! numerous domes a Burlington confess : 690

For kings and senates fit, the palace see,
 The temple breathing a religious awe ;
 Even framed with elegance the plain retreat,
 The private dwelling. Certain in his aim,
 Taste, never idly working, saves expense.

See ! sylvan scenes, where art alone pretends
 To dress her mistress, and disclose her charms :
 Such as a Pope in miniature has shown ;
 A Bathurst b'er the widening forest spreads ;
 And such as form a Richmond, Chiswick, Stowe. 700

August, around, what public works I see.
 Lo ! stately streets, lo ! squares that court the breeze,
 In spite of those to whom pertains the care,
 Ingulfing more than founded Roman ways.
 Lo ! rayed from cities o'er the brightened land,
 Connecting sea to sea, the solid road.
 Lo ! the proud arch (no vile exactor's stand)
 With easy sweep bestrides the chasing flood.
 See ! long canals, and deepened rivers join
 Each part with each, and with the circling main 710
 The whole enlivened isle. Lo ! ports expand,
 Free as the winds and waves, their sheltering arms.
 Lo ! streaming comfort o'er the troubled deep,
 On every pointed coast the lighthouse towers ;
 And, by the broad imperious mole repelled,
 Hark ! how the baffled storm indignant roars.'

As thick to view these varied wonders rose,
 Shook all my soul with transport, unassured,
 The vision broke ; and, on my waking eye,
 Rushed the still ruins of dejected Rome. 720



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS
BRITANNIA
A POEM

Et tantas audetis tollere moles?
Quos ego—sed motos præstat componere fluctus.
Post mihi non simili pœna commissa luetis.
Maturate fugam, regique hæc dicite vestro :
Non illi imperium pelagi, sœvumque tridentem,
Sed mihi sorte datum. Virgil, *Aeneid*, i, 134

As on the sea-beat shore Britannia sat,
Of her degenerate sons the faded fame,
Deep in her anxious heart, revolving sad :
Bare was her throbbing bosom to the gale,
That, hoarse and hollow, from the bleak surge blew ;
Loose flowed her tresses ; rent her azure robe.
Hung o'er the deep from her majestic brow
She tore the laurel, and she tore the bay.
Nor ceased the copious grief to bathe her cheek ;
Nor ceased her sobs to murmur to the main. 10
Peace discontented, nigh departing, stretched
Her dove-like wings : and war, though greatly roused,
Yet mourns his fettered hands. While thus the queen
Of nations spoke ; and what she said the muse
Recorded, faithful, in unbidden verse.

‘ Even not yon sail, that from the sky-mixed wave
Dawns on the sight, and wafts the royal youth,

A freight of future glory to my shore ;
 Even not the flattering view of golden days,
 And rising periods yet of bright renown,
 Beneath the parents, and their endless line
 Through late revolving time, can soothe my rage ;
 While, unchastised, the insulting Spaniard dares
 Infest the trading flood, full of vain war
 Despise my navies, and my merchants seize ;
 As, trusting to false peace, they fearless roam
 The world of waters wild ; made, by the toil
 And liberal blood of glorious ages, mine :
 Nor bursts my sleeping thunder on their head.
 Whence this unwonted patience, this weak doubt,
 This tame beseeching of rejected peace,
 This meek forbearance, this un-native fear,
 To generous Britons never known before ?
 And sailed my fleets for this ; on Indian tides
 To float inactive, with the veering winds ?
 The mockery of war ! while hot disease,
 And sloth distempered, swept off burning crowds,
 For action ardent ; and amid the deep,
 Inglorious, sunk them in a watery grave.
 There now they lie beneath the rolling flood,
 Far from their friends and country, unavenged ;
 And back the drooping war-ship comes again,
 Dispirited and thin ; her sons ashamed
 Thus idly to review their native shore ;
 With not one glory sparkling in their eye,
 One triumph on their tongue. A passenger,
 The violated merchant, comes along,
 That far sought wealth, for which the noxious gale
 He drew, and sweet beneath equator suns,
 By lawless force detained ; a force that soon
 Would melt away, and every spoil resign,
 Were once the British lion heard to roar.
 Whence is it that the proud Iberian thus,
 In their own well asserted element,

Dares rouse to wrath the masters of the main ?
 Who told him that the big incumbent war
 Would not, ere this, have rolled his trembling ports
 In smoky ruin, and his guilty stores,
 Won by the ravage of a butchered world,
 Yet, unatoned, sunk in the swallowing deep, 60
 Or led the glittering prize into the Thames ?

There was a time (Oh let my languid sons
 Resume their spirit at the rousing thought !)
 When all the pride of Spain, in one dread fleet,
 Swelled o'er the labouring surge ; like a whole heaven
 Of clouds, wide rolled before the boundless breeze.
 Gaily the splendid armament along
 Exultant ploughed, reflecting a red gleam,
 As sunk the sun, o'er all the flaming vast :
 Tall, gorgeous, and elate ; drunk with the dream 70
 Of easy conquest ; while their bloated war,
 Stretched out from sky to sky, the gathered force
 Of ages held in its capacious womb.
 But soon, regardless of the cumbrous pomp,
 My dauntless Britons came, a gloomy few,
 With tempests black, the goodly scene deformed,
 And laid their glory waste. The bolts of fate
 Resistless thundered through their yielding sides ;
 Fierce o'er their beauty blazed the lurid flame ;
 And seized in horrid grasp, or shattered wide, 80
 Amid the mighty waters, deep they sunk.
 Then too from every promontory chill,
 Rank fen, and cavern where the wild wave works,
 I swept confederate winds, and swelled a storm.
 Round the glad isle, snatched by the vengeful blast,
 The scattered remnants drove ; on the blind shelve,
 And pointed rock, that marks the indented shore,
 Relentless dashed, where loud the northern main
 Howls through the fractured Caledonian isles.

Such were the dawnings of my watery reign ; 90

But since how vast it grew, how absolute,
 Even in those troubled times, when dreadful Blake
 Awed angry nations with the British name,
 Let every humbled state, let Europe say,
 Sustained, and balanced, by my naval arm.
 Ah, what must those immortal spirits think
 Of your poor shifts ? Those, for their country's good,
 Who faced the blackest danger, knew no fear,
 No mean submission, but commanded peace,—
 Ah, how with indignation must they burn 100
 (If aught, but joy, can touch ethereal breasts)
 With shame, with grief, to see their feeble sons
 Shrink from that empire o'er the conquered seas,
 For which their wisdom planned, their councils glowed,
 And their veins bled through many a toiling age.

Oh, first of human blessings, and supreme,
 Fair peace ! How lovely, how delightful thou !
 By whose wide tie the kindred sons of men
 Like brothers live, in amity combined
 And unsuspecting faith ; while honest toil 110
 Gives every joy, and to those joys a right,
 Which idle, barbarous rapine but usurps.
 Pure is thy reign ; when, unaccursed by blood,
 Nought, save the sweetness of indulgent showers,
 Trickling distils into the vernant glebe ;
 Instead of mangled caresses, sad-seen,
 When the blithe sheaves lie scattered o'er the field ;
 When only shining shares, the crooked knife,
 And hooks imprint the vegetable wound ;
 When the land blushes with the rose alone, 120
 The falling fruitage and the bleeding vine.
 Oh, peace ! thou source and soul of social life ;
 Beneath whose calm inspiring influence,
 Science his views enlarges, art refines,
 And swelling commerce opens all her ports ;
 Blest be the man divine who gives us thee !

Who bids the trumpet hush his horrid clang,
 Nor blow the giddy nations into rage ;
 Who sheaths the murderous blade ; the deadly gun
 Into the well piled armoury returns ; 130
 And every vigour, from the work of death,
 To grateful industry converting, makes
 The country flourish, and the city smile.
 Unviolated, him the virgin sings ;
 And him the smiling mother to her train.
 Of him the shepherd, in the peaceful dale,
 Chants ; and, the treasures of his labour sure,
 The husbandman of him, as at the plough,
 Or team, he toils. With him the sailor soothes,
 Beneath the trembling moon, the midnight wave ; 140
 And the full city, warm, from street to street,
 And shop to shop, responsive, rings of him.
 Nor joys one land alone : his praise extends
 Far as the sun rolls the diffusive day ;
 Far as the breeze can bear the gifts of peace.
 Till all the happy nations catch the song.

What would not, peace ! the patriot bear for thee ?
 What painful patience ? What incessant care ?
 What mixed anxiety ? What sleepless toil ?
 Even from the rash protected what reproach ? 150
 For he thy value knows ; thy friendship he
 To human nature : but the better thou,
 The richer of delight, sometimes the more
 Inevitable war ; when ruffian force
 Awakes the fury of an injured state.
 Then the good easy man, whom reason rules,
 Who, while unhurt, knew nor offence, nor harm,
 Roused by bold insult, and injurious rage,
 With sharp and sudden check the astonished sons
 Of violence confounds ; firm as his cause, 160
 His bolder heart ; in awful justice clad ;
 His eyes effulging a peculiar fire :

And, as he charges through the prostrate war,
 His keen arm teaches faithless men, no more
 To dare the sacred vengeance of the just.

And what, my thoughtless sons, should fire you more
 Than when your well-earned empire of the deep
 The least beginning injury receives ?

What better cause can call your lightning forth,
 Your thunder wake, your dearest life demand ? 170

What better cause, than when your country sees
 The sly destruction at her vitals aimed ?

For oh ! it much imports you, 'tis your all,
 To keep your trade entire, entire the force
 And honour of your fleets ; o'er that to watch,
 Even with a hand severe, and jealous eye.

In intercourse be gentle, generous, just,
 By wisdom polished, and of manners fair ;
 But on the sea be terrible, untamed,
 Unconquerable still : let none escape

180

Who shall but aim to touch your glory there.

Is there the man into the lion's den

Who dares intrude, to snatch his young away ?

And is a Briton seized, and seized beneath
 The slumbering terrors of a British fleet ?

Then ardent rise ! Oh, great in vengeance rise !

O'ertum the proud, teach rapine to restore :

And as you ride sublimely round the world,
 Make every vessel stoop, make every state

At once their welfare and their duty know.

This is your glory ; this your wisdom ; this

The native power for which you were designed
 By fate, when fate designed the firmest state,

That e'er was seated on the subject sea ;

A state, alone, where liberty should live,

In these late times, this evening of mankind,

When Athens, Rome, and Carthage are no more,
 The world almost in slavish sloth dissolved.

190

For this, these rocks around your coast were thrown :
For this, your oaks, peculiar hardened, shoot 200
Strong into sturdy growth : for this, your hearts
Swell with a sullen courage, growing still
As danger grows ; and strength, and toil for this
Are liberal poured o'er all the fervent land.
Then cherish this, this unexpensive power,
Undangerous to the public, ever prompt,
By lavish nature thrust into your hand :
And, unencumbered with the bulk immense
Of conquest, whence huge empires rose, and fell
Self-crushed, extend your reign from shore to shore, 210
Where'er the wind your high behests can blow ;
And fix it deep on this eternal base.
For should the sliding fabric once give way,
Soon slackened quite, and past recovery broke,
It gathers ruin as it rolls along,
Steep rushing down to that devouring gulf,
Where many a mighty empire buried lies.
And should the big redundant flood of trade,
In which ten thousand thousand labours join
Their several currents, till the boundless tide 220
Rolls in a radiant deluge o'er the land ;
Should this bright stream, the least infected, point
Its course another way, o'er other lands
The various treasure would resistless pour,
Ne'er to be won again ; its ancient tract
Left a vile channel, desolate, and dead,
With all around a miserable waste.
Not Egypt, were her better heaven, the Nile,
Turned in the pride of flow ; when o'er his rocks,
And roaring cataracts, beyond the reach 230
Of dizzy vision piled, in one wide flash
An Ethiopian deluge foams amain ;
(Whence wondering fable traced him from the sky)
Even not that prime of earth, where harvests crowd
On untilled harvests, all the teeming year,

If of the fat o'erflowing culture robbed,
 Were then a more uncomfortable wild,
 Sterile, and void ; than, of her trade deprived,
 Britons, your boasted isle : her princes sunk ; 240
 Her high built honour mouldered to the dust ;
 Unnerved her force ; her spirit vanished quite ;
 With rapid wing her riches fled away ;
 Her unfrequented ports alone the sign
 Of what she was ; her merchants scattered wide ;
 Her hollow shops shut up ; and in her streets,
 Her fields, woods, markets, villages, and roads,
 The cheerful voice of labour heard no more.

Oh ! let not then waste luxury impair
 That manly soul of toil, which strings your nerves,
 And your own proper happiness creates ! 250
 Oh ! let not the soft penetrating plague
 Creep on the freeborn mind, and working there,
 With the sharp tooth of many a new-formed want,
 Endless, and idle all, eat out the heart
 Of liberty ; the high conception blast ;
 The noble sentiment, the impatient scorn
 Of base subjection, and the swelling wish
 For general good, erasing from the mind :
 While nought save narrow selfishness succeeds,
 And low design, the sneaking passions all 260
 Let loose, and reigning in the rankled breast.
 Induced at last, by scarce perceived degrees,
 Sapping the very frame of government,
 And life, a total dissolution comes ;
 Sloth, ignorance, dejection, flattery, fear.
 Oppression raging o'er the waste he makes ;
 The human being almost quite extinct ;
 And the whole state in broad corruption sinks.
 Oh, shun that gulf : that gaping ruin shun !
 And countless ages roll it far away 270
 From you, ye heaven-beloved ! May liberty,

The light of life ! the sun of human kind !
 Whence heroes, bards, and patriots borrow flame,
 Even where the keen depressive north descends,
 Still spread, exalt, and actuate your powers !
 While slavish southern climates beam in vain.
 And may a public spirit from the throne,
 Where every virtue sits, go copious forth,
 Live o'er the land ; the finer arts inspire ;
 Make thoughtful science raise his pensive head ; 280
 Blow the fresh bay, bid industry rejoice,
 And the rough sons of lowest labour smile.
 As when, profuse of spring, the loosened west
 Lifts up the pining year, and balmy breathes
 Youth, life, and love, and beauty, o'er the world.

But haste we from these melancholy shores,
 Nor to deaf winds, and waves, our fruitless plaint
 Pour weak ; the country claims our active aid ;
 That let us roam ; and where we find a spark
 Of public virtue, blow it into flame. 290
 And now, my sons, the sons of freedom, meet
 In awful senate ; thither let us fly ;
 Burn in the patriot's thought, flow from his tongue
 In fearless truth ; myself transformed, preside,
 And shed the spirit of Britannia round.'

This said ; her fleeting form and airy train
 Sunk in the gale ; and nought but ragged rocks
 Rushed on the broken eye ; and nought was heard
 But the rough cadence of the dashing wave.

ON THE DEATH OF MR AIKMAN THE PAINTER

OH could I draw, my friend, thy genuine mind,
Just as the living forms by thee designed ;
Of Raphael's figures none should fairer shine,
Nor Titian's colours longer last than mine.
A mind in wisdom old, in lenience young,
From fervent truth where every virtue sprung ;
Where all was real, modest, plain, sincere ;
Worth above show, and goodness unsevere :
Viewed round and round, as lucid diamonds throw
Still as you turn them, a revolving glow,
So did his mind reflect with secret ray,
In various virtues, heaven's internal day ;
Whether in high discourse it soared sublime
And sprung impatient o'er the bounds of time,
Or wandering nature through with raptured eye,
Adored the Hand that turned yon azure sky :
Whether to social life he bent his thought,
And the right poise of mingling passions sought,
Gay converse blest ; or in the thoughtful grove
Bid the heart open every source of love :
New varying lights still set before your eyes
The just, the good, the social, or the wise,
For such a death who can, who would, refuse
The friend a tear, averse the mournful muse ?
Yet pay we just acknowledgment to heaven,
Though snatched so soon, that Aikman e'er was given.
A friend, when dead, is but removed from sight,
Hid in the lustre of eternal light :
Oft with the mind he wonted converse keeps
In the lone walk, or when the body sleeps
Lets in the wandering ray, and all elate
Wings and attracts her to another state ;

And, when the parting storms of life are o'er,
May yet rejoin him in a happier shore.
As those we love decay, we die in part,
String after string is severed from the heart ;
Till loosened life at last—but breathing clay,
Without one pang, is glad to fall away.
Unhappy he who latest feels the blow,
Whose eyes have wept o'er every friend laid low,
Dragged lingering on from partial death to death ;
Till dying, all he can resign is breath.

SONG

UNLESS with my Amanda blest,
In vain I twine the woodbine bower ;
Unless to deck her sweeter breast,
In vain I rear the breathing flower.

Awakened by the genial year,
In vain the birds around me sing ;
In vain the freshening fields appear :—
Without my love there is no Spring.

TO AMANDA

COME, dear Amanda, quit the town,
And to the rural hamlets fly ;
Behold ! the wintry storms are gone ;
A gentle radiance glads the sky.

The birds awake, the flowers appear,
Earth spreads a verdant couch for thee,
'Tis joy and music all we hear,
'Tis love and beauty all we see.

Come, let us mark the gradual spring,
 How peeps the bud, the blossom blows ;
 Till Philomel begins to sing,
 And perfect May to swell the rose.

E'en so thy rising charms improve,
 As life's warm season grows more bright ;
 And opening to the sighs of love,
 Thy beauties glow with full delight.

TO MISS YOUNG, WITH A PRESENT OF HIS SEASONS

ACCEPT, loved nymph, this tribute due
 To tender friendship, love, and you :
 But with it take what breathed the whole,
 Oh, take to thine the poet's soul.
 If fancy here her power displays,
 And if a heart exalts these lays —
 You, fairest, in that fancy shine,
 And all that heart is fondly thine.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO MISS YOUNG

AH, urged too late ! from beauty's bondage free,
 Why did I trust my liberty with thee ?
 And thou, why didst thou, with inhuman art,
 If not resolved to take, seduce my heart ?
 Yes, yes, you said (for lovers' eyes speak true) ;
 You must have seen how fast my passion grew :
 And, when your glances chanced on me to shine,
 How my fond soul ecstatic sprung to thine !

But mark me, fair one ; what I now declare
 Thy deep attention claims, and serious care :
 It is no common passion fires my breast ;
 I must be wretched, or I must be blest !
 My woes all other remedy deny ;
 Or, pitying, give me hope, or bid me die !

AD PHOEBUM

IN IMITATION OF TIBULLUS

Huc ades, et teneræ morbos expelle puellæ,
 Huc ades, intonsâ Phœbe superbe comâ, etc.

Tibulli, *Carmina*, lib. iv, carm. iv.

COME, healing god, Apollo, come and aid,
 Moved by the tears of love, my tender maid ;
 No more let sickness dim those radiant eyes,
 Which never know to cheat or to disguise.
 If e'er my verse has pleased thy listening ear,
 O, now be friendly, now propitious hear ;
 Bring every virtuous herb, each root and flower
 Of cooling juice, and salutary power.
 Light is the task. To touch a hand so fair,
 Divine physician, will repay thy care.
 My tears are fled ; the god my suit approves ;
 He can't be wretched who sincerely loves.
 Protecting heaven, with more than common care,
 Smiles on his hopes, and guards him from despair.
 Raise from the pillow, raise thy languid head,
 Come forth, my love, and quit thy sickly bed.
 Come forth, my love ; for thee the balmy spring
 Breathes every sweet ; for thee the zephyrs bring
 Their healing gales ; for thee the graces lead
 The smiling hours, and paint the flowery mead.
 As nature, drooping long beneath the reign
 Of dreary winter, now revives again,
 Calls all her beauties out, and charms us more
 From what we suffered in their loss before,
 So from thy tedious illness shalt thou rise
 More sweetly fair ; and, in those languid eyes
 And faded cheeks, returning health shall place
 A fresher bloom, and more attractive grace.
 Then shall my bounding heart forget its woe,
 And think it never more a pain can know ;
 Then shall my muse thy charms more gaily sing,
 And hail thee as the nightingale the spring.

COME, GENTLE GOD

COME, gentle god of soft desire,
 Come and possess my happy breast,
 Not fury-like in flames and fire,
 In rapture, rage, and nonsense dressed ;

These are the vain disguise of love,
 And, or bespeak dissembled pains ;
 Or else a fleeting fever prove,
 The frantic fever of the veins.

But come in friendship's angel-guise ;
 Yet dearer thou than friendship art,
 More tender spirit in thy eyes,
 More sweet emotions at the heart.

Oh, come with goodness in thy train,
 With peace and transport void of storm,
 And wouldest thou me for ever gain,
 Put on Amanda's winning form.

TO MYRA

O THOU, whose tender serious eyes
 Expressive speak the mind I love ;
 The gentle azure of the skies,
 The pensive shadows of the grove :

O mix their beauteous beams with mine,
 And let us interchange our hearts ;
 Let all their sweetness on me shine,
 Poured through my soul be all their darts.

Ah ! 'tis too much ! I cannot bear
 At once so soft, so keen a ray :
 In pity then, my lovely fair,
 O turn these killing eyes away !

But what avails it to conceal
One charm, where nought but charms we see?
Their lustre then again reveal,
And let me, Myra, die of thee !

TO FORTUNE

FOR ever, fortune, wilt thou prove
An unrelenting foe to love ;
And, when we meet a mutual heart,
Come in between, and bid us part :

Bid us sigh on from day to day,
And wish, and wish the soul away,
Till youth and genial years are flown
And all the life of life is gone ?

But busy, busy still art thou,
To bind the loveless joyless vow,
The heart from pleasure to delude,
And join the gentle to the rude.

For pomp, and noise, and senseless show,
To make us nature's joys forego,
Beneath a gay dominion groan,
And put the golden fetter on !

For once, O fortune ! hear my prayer,
And I absolve thy future care :
All other blessings I resign,
Make but the dear Amanda mine !

A POETICAL EPISTLE TO SIR WILLIAM
BENNET, BART., OF GRUBBAT

My trembling muse your honour does address,
That it's a bold attempt most humbly I confess ;
If you'll encourage her young fagging flight,
She'll upwards soar and mount Parnassus' height.
If little things with great may be compared,
In Rome it so with divine Virgil fared ;
The tuneful bard Augustus did inspire,
Made his great genius flash poetic fire ;
But if upon my flight your honour frowns,
The muse folds up her wings, and dying—justice owns.

A POEM TO THE MEMORY OF MR CONGREVE

INSCRIBED TO HER GRACE,
HENRIETTA, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH

OFT has the muse, with mean attempt, employed
Her heaven-born voice to flatter prosperous guilt,
Or trivial greatness : often stooped her song
To soothe ambition in his frantic rage,
The dire destroyer, while a bleeding world
Wept o'er his crimes. Of this pernicious skill
Unknowing I, these voluntary lays
To genuine worth devote ; to worth by all
Confessed and mourned ; to Congreve now no more.

First of the fairer kind ! by heaven adorned
With every nobler praise ; whose smiles can lift
The muse unknown to fame, indulgent now
Permit her strain, ennobled by a name,
To all the better few, and chief to thee,
Bright Marlborough, ever sacred, ever dear.

Lamented shade ! in him the comic muse,
Parent of gay instruction, lost her loved,
Her last remaining hope ; and pensive now
Resigns to folly, and his mimic rout,

20

Her throne usurped : presage of darker times,
And deeper woes to come ! with taste declined
Fallen virtue droops ; and o'er the ill-omened age,
Unseen, unfeared, impend the thousand ills
That wait on ignorance : no Congreve now

To scourge our crimes, or laugh to scorn our fools,
A new and nameless herd. Nature was his,
Bold, sprightly, various : and superior art,
Curious to choose each better grace, unseen
Of vulgar eyes ; wild delicacy free ;

Though laboured, happy ; and though strong, refined.
Judgment, severely cool, o'erlooked his toil,

31

And patient finished all : each fair design
With freedom regular, correctly great,
A master's skilful daring. Closely wrought
His meaning fable, with deep art perplexed,
With striking ease unravelled : no thin plot
Seen through at once and scorned ; or ill-concealed
By borrowing aids of mimicry and farce.

His characters strong-featured, equal, just,
From finer nature drawn ; and all the mind

40

Through all her mazes traced ; each darker vice,
And darling folly, under each disguise,
By either sex assumed, of studied ease,
False friendship, loose severity, vain wit,
Dull briskness, shallow depth, or coward rage.

Of the whole muse possessed, his piercing eye
Discerned each richer vein of genuine mirth,
Humour or wit ; where differing, where agreed ;
How counterfeited, or by folly's grin,

Or affectation's air ; and what their force

50

To please, to move, to shake the ravished scene
With laughter unreproved. To him the soul,

In all her higher workings, too, was known :
 What passions tumult there ; whence their prompt
 spring,
 Their sudden flood of rage, and gradual fall ;
 Infinite motion ! source supreme of bliss,
 Or woe to man ; our heaven, or hell, below !

Such was his public name ; nor less allowed
 His private worth : by nature made for praise.
 A pleasing form ; a soul sincere and clear, 60
 Where all the human graces mixed their charms,
 Pure candour, easy goodness, open truth,
 Spontaneous all : where strength and beauty joined,
 With wit indulgent ; humble in the height
 Of envied honours ; and, but rarely found,
 The unjealous friend of every rival worth.
 Adorned for social life : each talent his
 To win each heart ; the charm of happy ease,
 Free mirth, gay learning, ever smiling wit,
 To all endeared, a pleasure without pain ; 70
 What Halifax approved, and Marlborough mourns.

Not so the illiberal mind, where knowledge dwells,
 Uncouth and harsh, with her attendant pride,
 Impatient of attention, prone to blame,
 Disdaining to be pleased ; condemning all,
 By all condemned ; for social joys unfit,
 In solitude self-cursed, the child of spleen ;
 Obliged, ungrateful ; unobliged, a foe,
 Poor, vicious, old ; such fierce-eyed Asper was.
 Now meaner Cenus, trivial with design, 80
 Courts poor applause by levity of face,
 And scorn of serious thought ; to mischief prompt,
 Though impotent to wound ; profuse of wealth,
 Yet friendless and unloved ; vain, fluttering, false :
 A vacant head, and an ungenerous heart.

But slighting these ignoble names, the muse
 Pursues her favourite son, and sees him now,
 From this dim spot enlarged, triumphant soar
 Beyond the walk of time to better worlds,
 Where all is new, all wondrous, and all blest ! 90
 What art thou, death ! by mankind poorly feared,
 Yet period of their ills. On thy near shore,
 Trembling they stand, and see, through dreaded mists,
 The eternal port, irresolute to leave
 This various misery, these air-fed dreams
 Which men call life, and fame. Mistaken minds !
 'Tis reason's prime aspiring, greatly just ;
 'Tis happiness supreme, to venture forth
 In quest of nobler worlds ; to try the deeps
 Of dark futurity, with heaven our guide, 100
 The unerring hand that led us safe through time ;
 That planted in the soul this powerful hope,
 This infinite ambition of new life,
 And endless joys, still rising, ever new.

These Congreve tastes, safe on the ethereal coast,
 Joined to the numberless, immortal choir
 Of spirits blest. High-seated among these,
 He sees the public fathers of mankind,
 The greatly good, those universal minds,
 Who drew the sword, or planned the holy scheme, 110
 For liberty and right ; to check the rage
 Of blood-stained tyranny, and save a world.
 Such, high-born Marlborough, be thy sire divine
 With wonder named ; fair freedom's champion he,
 By heaven approved, a conqueror without guilt,
 And such, on earth his friend, and joined on high
 By deathless love, Godolphin's patriot worth,
 Just to his country's fame, yet of her wealth
 With honour frugal ; above interest great.
 Hail men immortal ! social virtues hail ! 120
 First heirs of praise !—But I, with weak essay,

Wrong the superior theme ; while heavenly choirs,
In strains high-warbled to celestial harps,
Resound your names ; and Congreve's added voice
In heaven exalts what he admired below.

With these he mixes, now no more to swerve
From reason's purest law ; no more to please,
Borne by the torrent down, a sensual age.
Pardon, loved shade, that I with friendly blame
Slight-note thy error ; not to wrong thy worth, 130
Or shade thy memory, (far from my soul
Be that base aim) but haply to deter,
From flattering the gross vulgar, future pens,
Powerful like thine in every grace, and skilled
To win the listening soul with virtuous charms,
If manly thought and wit refined may hope
To please an age, in aimless folly sunk,
And sliding swift into the depth of vice.

Consuming pleasure leads the gay and young
Through their vain round ; and venal faith the old,
Or avarice mean of soul : instructive arts 141
Pursued no more : the general taste extinct,
Or all debased : even sacred liberty
The great man's jest, and Britain's welfare, named
By her degenerate sons the poet's dream,
Or fancy's air-built vision, gaily vain.
Such the lost age : yet still the muse can find,
Superior and apart, a sacred band,
Heroic virtues, who ne'er bowed the knee
To sordid interest ; who dare greatly claim 150
The privilege of men, unfearing truth,
And freedom, heaven's first gift ; the ennobling bliss
That renders life of price, and cheaply saved
At life's expense ; our sum of happiness.
On these the drooping muses fix their eyes ;
From these expect their ancient fame restored.

Nor will the hope be vain ; the public weal
 With their's fast linked : a generous truth concealed
 From narrow-thoughted power, and known alone
 To souls of highest rank. With these, the fair 160
 Be joined in just applause ; the brighter few,
 Who raised above gay folly, and the whirl
 Of fond amusements, emulate thy praise,
 Illustrious Marlborough ; pleased, like thee, to shine
 Propitious on the muse ; whose charms inspire
 Her noblest raptures, and whose goodness crowns.

LISY'S PARTING WITH HER CAT

THE dreadful hour with leaden pace approached,
 Lashed fiercely on by unrelenting fate,
 When Lisy and her bosom cat must part :
 For now, to school and pensive needle doomed,
 She's banished from her childhood's undashed joy,
 And all the pleasing intercourse she kept
 With her gray comrade, which has often soothed
 Her tender moments, while the world around
 Glowed with ambition, business, and vice,
 Or lay dissolved in sleep's delicious arms ; 10
 And from their dewy orbs the conscious stars
 Shed on their friendship influence benign.

But see where mournful puss, advancing, stood
 With outstretched tail, casts looks of anxious woe
 On melting Lisy, in whose eye the tear
 Stood tremulous, and thus would fain have said,
 If nature had not tied her struggling tongue :
 ' Unkind, Oh ! who shall now with fattening milk,
 With flesh, with bread, and fish beloved, and meat,
 Regale my taste ; and at the cheerful fire, 20
 Ah, who shall bask me in their downy lap ?
 Who shall invite me to the bed, and throw
 The bedclothes o'er me in the winter night,

When Eurus roars ? Beneath whose soothing hand
Soft shall I purr ? But now, when Lisy's gone,
What is the dull officious world to me ?
I loathe the thoughts of life : thus plained the cat,
While Lisy felt, by sympathetic touch,
These anxious thoughts that in her mind revolved,
And casting on her a desponding look, 30
She snatched her in her arms with eager grief,
And mewing, thus began : " Oh, cat beloved !
Thou dear companion of my tender years !
Joy of my youth ! that oft hast licked my hands
With velvet tongue ne'er stained by mouse's blood.
Oh, gentle cat ! how shall I part with thee ?
How dead and heavy will the moments pass
When you are not in my delighted eye,
With Cubi playing, or your flying tail.
How harshly will the softest muslin feel, 40
And all the silk of schools, while I no more
Have your sleek skin to soothe my softened sense ?
How shall I eat while you are not beside
To share the bit ? How shall I ever sleep
While I no more your lulling murmurs hear ?
Yet we must part—so rigid fate decrees—
But never shall your loved idea, dear,
Part from my soul, and when I first can mark
The embroidered figure on the snowy lawn,
Your image shall my needle keen employ. 50
Hark ! now I'm called away ! Oh direful sound !
I come—I come, but first I charge you all—
You—you—and you, particularly you,
Oh, Mary, Mary, feed her with the best,
Repose her nightly in the warmest couch,
And be a Lisy to her ! —Having said,
She sat her down, and with her head across,
Rushed to the evil which she could not shun,
While a sad mew went knelling to her heart.

STANZAS

Written by Thomson on the blank leaf of a copy of his *Seasons*, sent by him to Mr Lyttelton, soon after the death of his wife

Go, little book, and find our friend,
Who nature and the muses loves,
Whose cares the public virtues blend
With all the softness of the groves.

A fitter time thou canst not choose,
His fostering friendship to repay ;
Go then, and try, my rural muse,
To steal his widowed hours away.

ON MRS MENDEZ' BIRTHDAY

WHO WAS BORN ON VALENTINE'S DAY

THINE is the gentle day of love,
When youths and virgins try their fate ;
When, deep retiring to the grove,
Each feathered songster weds his mate.

With tempered beams the skies are bright,
Earth decks in smiles her pleasing face ;
Such is the day that gave thee light,
And speaks as such thy every grace.

VERSES ON RECEIVING A FLOWER FROM HIS MISTRESS

MADAM, the flower that I received from you,
Ere I came home, had lost its lovely hue :
As flowers deprivèd of the genial day,
Its sprightly bloom did wither and decay.
' Dear, fading flower, I know full well,' said I,

' The reason why you shed your sweets and die ;
You want the influence of her enlivening eye.
Your case is mine '—Absence, that plague of love !
With heavy pace makes every minute move :
It of my being is an empty blank,
And hinders me myself with men to rank ;
Your cheering presence quickens me again,
And new-sprung life exults in every vein.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER

YE fabled muses, I your aid disclaim,
Your airy raptures, and your fancied flame :
True genuine woe my throbbing breast inspires,
Love prompts my lays, and filial duty fires ;
The soul springs instant at the warm design,
And the heart dictates every flowing line.
See ! where the kindest, best of mothers lies,
And death has shut her ever weeping eyes ;
Has lodged at last peace in her weary breast,
And lulled her many piercing cares to rest.
No more the orphan train around her stands,
While her full heart upbraids her needy hands !
No more the widow's lonely fate she feels,
The shock severe that modest want conceals,
The oppressor's scourge, the scorn of wealthy pride,
And poverty's unnumbered ills beside.
For see ! attended by the angelic throng,
Through yonder world of light she glides along,
And claims the well-earned raptures of the sky.
Yet fond concern recalls the mother's eye :
She seeks the helpless orphans left behind :
So hardly left, so bitterly resigned !
Still, still is she my soul's divinest theme,
The waking vision, and the wailing dream.
Amid the ruddy sun's enlivening blaze

O'er my dark eyes her dewy image plays,
And in the dread dominion of the night
Shines out again the sadly pleasing sight.
Triumphant virtue all around her darts,
And more than volumes every look imparts—
Looks, soft, yet awful ; melting, yet serene ;
Where both the mother and the saint are seen.
But ah ! that night—that torturing night remains ;
May darkness dye it with its deepest stains,
May joy or it forsake her rosy bowers,
And screaming sorrow blast its baleful hours.
When on the margin of the briny flood,
Chilled with a sad presaging damp I stood,
Took the last look, ne'er to behold her more,
And mixed our murmurs with the wavy roar :
Heard the last words fall from her pious tongue,
Then, wild into the bulging vessel flung,
Which soon, too soon, conveyed me from her sight,
Dearer than life, and liberty, and light !
Why was I then, ye powers, reserved for this,
Nor sunk that moment in the vast abyss ?
Devoured at once by the relentless wave,
And 'whelmed for ever in a watery grave ?—
Down, ye wild wishes of unruly woe !—
I see her with immortal beauty glow ;
The early wrinkle, care-contracted, gone,
Her tears all wiped, and all her sorrows flown ;
The exalting voice of heaven I hear her breathe,
To soothe her soul in agonies of death.
I see her through the mansions blest above,
And now she meets her dear expecting love.
Heart-cheering sight ! but yet, alas ! o'erspread
By the damp gloom of grief's uncheerful shade.
Come then, of reason the reflecting hour,
And let me trust the kind o'er-ruling power,
Who from the night commands the shining day
The poor man's portion, and the orphan's stay.

TO THE REVEREND MR MURDOCH

RECTOR OF STRADDISHALL, IN SUFFOLK

THUS safely low, my friend, thou canst not fall :
 Here reigns a deep tranquillity o'er all ;
 No noise, no care, no vanity, no strife ;
 Men, woods, and fields, all breathe untroubled life.
 Then keep each passion down, however dear ;
 Trust me, the tender are the most severe.
 Guard, while 'tis thine, thy philosophic ease,
 And ask no joy but that of virtuous peace ;
 That bids defiance to the storms of fate :
 High bliss is only for a higher state !

THE INCOMPARABLE SOPORIFIC DOCTOR

SWEET, sleeky doctor ! dear pacific soul !
 Lay at the beef, and suck the vital bowl !
 Still let the involving smoke around thee fly,
 And broad-looked dulness settle in thine eye.
 Ah ! soft in down these dainty limbs repose,
 And in the very lap of slumber doze ;
 But chiefly on the lazy day of grace,
 Call forth the lambent glories of thy face ;
 If aught the thoughts of dinner can prevail—
 And sure the Sunday's dinner cannot fail.
 To the thin church in sleepy pomp proceed,
 And lean on the lethargic book thy head.
 These eyes wipe often with the hallowed lawn,
 Profoundly nod, immeasurably yawn.
 Slow let the prayers by thy meek lips be sung,
 Nor let thy thoughts be distanced by thy tongue ;
 If ere the lingerers are within a call,
 Or if on prayers thou deign'st to think at all,

Yet—only yet—the swimming head we bend ;
 But when, serene, the pulpit you ascend,
 Through every joint a gentle horror creeps,
 And round you the consenting audience sleeps.
 So when an ass with sluggish front appears,
 The horses start, and prick their quivering ears ;
 But soon as e'er the sage is heard to bray,
 The fields all thunder, and they bound away.

1

A POEM, SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
 SIR ISAAC NEWTON

SHALL the great soul of Newton quit this earth,
 To mingle with his stars ; and every muse,
 Astonished into silence, shun the weight
 Of honours due to his illustrious name ?
 But what can man ?—Even now the sons of light,
 In strains high warbled to seraphic lyre,
 Hail his arrival on the coast of bliss.
 Yet am I not deterred, though high the theme,
 And sung to harps of angels, for with you,
 Ethereal flames ! ambitious, I aspire 10
 In nature's general symphony to join.

And what new wonders can ye show your guest !
 Who, while on this dim spot, where mortals toil
 Clouded in dust, from motion's simple laws,
 Could trace the secret hand of Providence,
 Wide-working through this universal frame.

Have ye not listened while he bound the suns
 And planets, to their spheres : the unequal task
 Of human kind till then ? Oft had they rolled
 O'er erring man the year, and oft disgraced

10

20

The pride of schools, before their course was known
 Full in its causes and effects to him,
 All-piercing sage : who sat not down and dreamed
 Romantic schemes, defended by the din
 Of specious words, and tyranny of names ;
 But, bidding his amazing mind attend,
 And with heroic patience years on years
 Deep-searching, saw at last the system dawn,
 And shine, of all his race, on him alone.

What were his raptures then, how pure, how strong !

30

And what the triumphs of old Greece and Rome,
 By his diminished, but the pride of boys
 In some small fray victorious, when, instead
 Of shattered parcels of this earth usurped
 By violence unmanly, and sore deeds
 Of cruelty and blood, nature herself
 Stood all subdued by him, and open laid
 Her every latent glory to his view.

All intellectual eye, our solar round
 First gazing through, he by the blended power 40
 Of gravitation and projection, saw
 The whole in silent harmony revolve.
 From unassisted vision hid, the moons
 To cheer remoter planets numerous poured,
 By him in all their mingled tracts were seen.
 He also fixed the wandering queen of night,
 Whether she wanes into a scanty orb,
 Or, waxing broad, with her pale shadowy light,
 In a soft deluge overflows the sky.
 Her every motion clear-discerning, he 50
 Adjusted to the mutual main, and taught
 Why now the mighty mass of waters swells
 Resistless, heaving on the broken rocks,
 And the full river turning : till again

The tide revertive, unattracted, leaves
A yellow waste of idle sands behind.

Then breaking hence, he took his ardent flight
Through the blue infinite ; and every star,
Which the clear concave of a winter's night
Pours on the eye, or astronomic tube, 60
Far stretching, snatches from the dark abyss ;
Or such as farther in successive skies
To fancy shine alone, at his approach
Blazed into suns, the living centre each
Of an harmonious system : all combined,
And ruled unerring by that single power,
Which draws the stone projected to the ground.

O unprofuse magnificence divine !
O wisdom truly perfect ! thus to call
From a few causes such a scheme of things,
Effects so various, beautiful, and great, 70
An universe complete ! And O, beloved
Of Heaven ! whose well-purged penetrative eye
The mystic veil transpiercing, inly scanned
The rising, moving, wide-established frame.

He, first of men, with awful wing pursued
The comet through the long elliptic curve.
As round innumerable worlds he wound his way ;
Till, to the forehead of our evening sky
Returned, the blazing wonder glares anew, 80
And o'er the trembling nations shakes dismay.

The heavens are all his own ; from the wide rule
Of whirling vortices, and circling spheres,
To their first great simplicity restored.
The schools astonished stood ; but found it vain
To combat still with demonstration strong.
And, unawakened, dream beneath the blaze

Of truth. At once their pleasing visions fled,
With the gay shadows of the morning mixed,
When Newton rose, our philosophic sun !

90

The aerial flow of sound was known to him,
From whence it first in wavy circles breaks,
Till the touched organ takes the meaning in.
Nor could the darting beam of speed immense
Escape his swift pursuit, and measuring eye.
Even light itself, which every thing displays,
Shone undiscovered, till his brighter mind
Untwisted all the shining robe of day ;
And, from the whitening undistinguished blaze,
Collecting every ray into his kind, 100
To the charmed eye educed the gorgeous train
Of parent colours. First the flaming red
Sprung vivid forth ; the tawny orange next ;
And next delicious yellow ; by whose side
Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing green.
Then the pure blue, that swells autumnal skies,
Ethereal played : and then, of sadder hue,
Emerged the deepened indigo, as when
The heavy-skirted evening droops with frost.
While the last gleamings of refracted light
Died in the fainting violet away.
These, when the clouds distil the rosy shower,
Shine out distinct adown the watery bow ;
While o'er our heads the dewy vision bends
Delightful, melting on the fields beneath.
Myriads of mingling dyes from these result,
And myriads still remain ; infinite source
Of beauty, ever flushing, ever new !

110

Did ever poet image aught so fair,
Dreaming in whispering groves, by the hoarse
brook, 120
Or prophet, to whose rapture heaven descends ?

Even now the setting sun and shifting clouds,
Seen, Greenwich, from thy lovely heights, declare
How just, how beauteous the refractive law.

The noiseless tide of time, all bearing down
To vast eternity's unbounded sea,
Where the green islands of the happy shine,
He stemmed alone ; and to the source (involved
Deep in primeval gloom) ascending, raised
His lights at equal distances, to guide
Historian, wildered on his darksome way.

130

But who can number up his labours ; who
His high discoveries sing ; when but a few
Of the deep-studying race can stretch their minds
To what he knew ? In fancy's lighter thought,
How shall the muse then grasp the mighty theme ?

What wonder thence that his devotion swelled
Responsive to his knowledge ? For could he,
Whose piercing mental eye diffusive saw
The finished university of things,
In all its order, magnitude, and parts,
Forbear incessant to adore that Power
Who fills, sustains, and actuates the whole ?

140

Say, ye who best can tell, ye happy few,
Who saw him in the softest lights of life,
All withheld, indulging to his friends
The vast unborrowed treasures of his mind,
Oh, speak the wondrous man ! how mild, how calm,
How greatly humble, how divinely good ;
How firm established on eternal truth ;
Fervent in doing well, with every nerve
Still pressing on, forgetful of the past,
And panting for perfection : far above
Those little cares and visionary joys

150

That so perplex the fond impassioned heart
Of ever cheated, ever trusting man.

This, Conduit, from thy rural hours we hope,
As, through the pleasing shade where nature pours
Her every sweet, in studious ease you walk ;
The social passions smiling at thy heart,
That glows with all the recollected sage. 160

And you, ye hopeless, gloomy-minded tribe,
You who, unconscious of those nobler flights
That reach impatient at immortal life,
Against the prime endearing privilege
Of being dare contend, say, can a soul
Of such extensive, deep, tremendous powers,
Enlarging still, be but a finer breath
Of spirits dancing through their tubes awhile,
And then for ever lost in vacant air ? 170

But hark ! methinks I hear a warning voice,
Solemn as when some awful change is come,
Sound through the world—' 'Tis done !—the measure's
full ;

And I resign my charge.'—Ye mouldering stones,
That build the towering pyramid, the proud
Triumphal arch, the monument effaced
By ruthless ruin, and whate'er supports
The worshipped name of hoar antiquity,
Down to the dust ! What grandeur can ye boast
While Newton lifts his column to the skies,
Beyond the waste of time. Let no weak drop
Be shed for him. The virgin in her bloom
Cut off, the joyous youth, and darling child,
These are the tombs that claim the tender tear,
And elegiac song. But Newton calls
For other notes of gratulation high,
That now he wanders through those endless worlds
He here so well descried ; and, wondering, talks
And hymns their Author with his glad compeers. 180

O Britain's boast ! whether with angels thou
Sittest in dread discourse, or fellow-blessed,
Who joy to see the honour of their kind ;
Or whether, mounted on cherubic wing,
Thy swift career is with the whirling orbs,
Comparing things with things, in rapture lost,
And grateful adoration, for that light
So plenteous rayed into thy mind below,
From light himself ; oh, look with pity down
On human kind, a frail erroneous race !
Exalt the spirit of a downward world !
O'er thy dejected country chief preside,
And be her genius called ! Her studies raise,
Correct her manners, and inspire her youth.
For, though depraved and sunk, she brought thee forth,
And glories in thy name : she points thee out
To all her sons, and bids them eye thy star :
While, in expectance of the second life,
When time shall be no more, thy sacred dust
Sleeps with her kings, and dignifies the scene.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF
WALES: AN ODE

WHILE secret-leaguing nations frown around,
Ready to pour the long-expected storm ;
While she, who wont the restless Gaul to bound,
Britannia, drooping, grows an empty form ;
While on our vitals selfish parties prey,
And deep corruption eats our soul away :

Yet in the goddess of the main appears
A gleam of joy, gay-flushing every grace,
As she the cordial voice of millions hears,
Rejoicing, zealous, o'er thy rising race :
Straight her rekindling eyes resume their fire,
The virtues smile, the muses tune the lyre.

But more enchanting than the muse's song,

United Britons thy dear offspring hail :

The city triumphs through her glowing throng,

The shepherd tells his transport to the dale ;
The sons of roughest toil forget their pain,
And the glad sailor cheers the midnight main.

Can aught from fair Augusta's gentle blood,

And thine, thou friend of liberty ! be born :

Can aught save what is lovely, generous, good ;

What will, at once, defend us, and adorn ?

From thence prophetic joy new Edwards eyes,
New Henries, Annas, and Elizas rise.

May fate my fond devoted days extend,

To sing the promised glories of thy reign !

What though, by years depressed, my muse might bend ;

My heart will teach her still a nobler strain :

How, with recovered Britain, will she soar,

When France insults, and Spain shall rob no more.

A PASTORAL BETWEEN THIRYSIS AND CORYDON UPON THE DEATH OF DAMON

BY WHOM IS MEANT MR W. RIDDELL

THIRYSIS

SAY, tell me true, what is the doleful cause
That Corydon is not the man he was ?

Your cheerful presence used to lighten cares,
And from the plains to banish gloomy fears.

Whene'er unto the circling swains you sung,
Our ravished souls upon the music hung ;

The gazing, listening flocks forgot their meat,
While vocal grottoes did your lays repeat :

But now your gravity our mirth rebukes,

And in your downcast and desponding looks
Appears some fatal and impending woe ;
I fear to ask, and yet desire to know.

CORYDON

The doleful news, how shall I, Thirysis, tell ?
In blooming youth the hapless Damon fell :
He's dead, he's dead, and with him all my joy ;
The mournful thought does all gay forms destroy :
This is the cause of my unusual grief,
Which sullenly admits of no relief.

THIRYSIS

Begone all mirth, begone all sports and play,
To a deluge of grief and tears give way !
Damon the just, the generous, and the young,
Must Damon's worth and merit be unsung ?
No, Corydon, the wondrous youth you knew
How as in years so he in virtue grew ;
Embalm his fame in never dying verse,
As a just tribute to his doleful hearse.

CORYDON

Assist me mighty grief, my breast inspire
With generous heats and with thy wildest fire,
While in a solemn and a mournful strain
Of Damon gone for ever I complain.
Ye muses, weep ; your mirth and songs forbear,
And for him sigh and shed a friendly tear.
He was your favourite, and by your aid
In charming verse his witty thoughts arrayed ;
He had of knowledge, learning, wit, a store,
To it denied he still pressed after more.
He was a pious and a virtuous soul,
And still pressed forward to the heavenly goal ;
He was a faithful, true, and constant friend,

Faithful and true, and constant to the end.
 Ye flowers, hang down and droop your heads,
 No more around your grateful odours spread ;
 Ye leafy trees, your blooming honours shed,
 Damon for ever from your shade is fled ;
 Fled to the mansions of eternal light,
 Where endless wonders strike his happy sight.
 Ye birds, be mute, as through the trees you fly,
 Mute as the grave wherein my friend does lie.
 Ye winds, breathe sighs as through the air you rove,
 And in sad pomp the trembling branches move.
 Ye gliding brooks, Oh weep your channels dry,
 My flowing tears them fully shall supply ;
 You in soft murmurs may your grief express,
 And yours, you swains, in mournful songs confess.
 I to some dark and gloomy shade will fly,
 Dark as the grave wherein my friend does lie ;
 And for his death to lonely rocks complain
 In mournful accents and a dying strain,
 While pining echo answers me again.

ODE TO SERAPHINA

THE wanton's charms, however bright,
 Are like the false illusive light,
 Whose flattering unauspicious blaze
 To precipices oft betrays :
 But that sweet ray your beauties dart,
 Which clears the mind, and cleans the heart,
 Is like the sacred queen of night.
 Who pours a lovely gentle light
 Wide o'er the dark, by wanderers blest,
 Conducting them to peace and rest.

A vicious love depraves the mind,
 'Tis anguish, guilt, and folly joined ;

But Seraphina's eyes dispense
A mild and gracious influence ;
Such as in visions angels shed
Around the heaven-illumined head.
To love thee, Seraphina, sure
Is to be tender, happy, pure ;
'Tis from low passions to escape,
And woo bright virtue's fairest shape ;
'Tis ecstasy with wisdom joined ;
And heaven infused into the mind.

EPITAPH ON MISS STANLEY

HERE, Stanley, rest ! escaped this mortal strife,
Above the joys, beyond the woes of life,
Fierce pangs no more thy lively beauties stain,
And sternly try thee with a year of pain :
No more sweet patience, feigning oft relief,
Lights thy sick eye, to cheat a parent's grief :
With tender art to save her anxious groan,
No more thy bosom presses down its own :
Now well earned peace is thine, and bliss sincere
Ours be the lenient, not unpleasing tear !

O born to bloom, then sink beneath the storm !
To show us virtue in her fairest form ;
To show us artless reason's moral reign,
What boastful science arrogates in vain ;
The obedient passions knowing each their part ;
Calm light the head, and harmony the heart !

Yes, we must follow soon, will glad obey ;
When a few suns have rolled their cares away,
Tired with vain life, will close the willing eye :
'Tis the great birthright of mankind to die.

Blessed be the bark that wafts us to the shore,
 Where death-divided friends shall part no more :
 To join thee there, here with thy dust repose,
 Is all the hope thy hapless mother knows.

TO THE MEMORY OF
 THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD TALBOT

DEDICATED TO HIS SON, 'THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
 THE LORD TALBOT'

WHILE with the public, you, my lord, lament
 A friend and father lost ; permit the muse,
 The muse assigned of old a double theme,
 To praise dead worth and humble living pride,
 Whose generous task begins where interest ends ;
 Permit her on a Talbot's tomb to lay
 This cordial verse sincere, by truth inspired,
 Which means not to bestow but borrow fame.
 Yes, she may sing his matchless virtues now—
 Unhappy that she may !—But where begin ? 10
 How from the diamond single out each ray,
 That, though they tremble with ten thousand hues,
 Effuse one poignant undivided light ?

Let the low-minded of these narrow days
 No more presume to deem the lofty tale
 Of ancient times, in pity to their own,
 Romance. In Talbot we united saw
 The piercing eye, the quick enlightened soul
 The graceful ease, the flowing tongue of Greece,
 Joined to the virtues and the force of Rome. 20

Eternal wisdom, that all-quicken sun,
 Whence every life, in just proportion, draws

Directing light and actuating flame,
 Ne'er with a larger portion of its beams
 Awakened mortal clay. Hence steady, calm,
 Diffusive, deep and clear, his reason saw,
 With instantaneous view, the truth of things ;
 Chief what to human life and human bliss
 Pertains, that kindest science, fit for man :
 And hence, responsive to his knowledge, glowed 30
 His ardent virtue. Ignorance and vice,
 In consort foul, agree ; each heightening each ;
 While virtue draws from knowledge nobler fire,
 Is knowledge of true pleasure proved by deeds.

What grand, what comely, and what tender sense,
 What talent, and what virtue was not his ?

All that can render man or great, or good,
 Give useful worth, or amiable grace ?

Nor could he brook in studious shade to lie,
 In soft retirement, indolently pleased 40

With selfish peace. The siren of the wise,
 (Who steals the Aonian song, and in the shape
 Of virtue, woos them from a worthless world)

Though deep he felt her charms, could never melt
 His strenuous spirit, recollect ed, calm,
 As silent night, yet active as the day.

The more the bold, the bustling, and the bad,
 Usurp the reins of power, the more behoves,
 Becomes it virtue, with indignant zeal,

To check their conjuration. Shall low views 50

Of sneaking interest or luxurious vice,
 The villain's passions quicken more to toil,

And dart a livelier vigour through the soul,
 Than those that mingled with our truest good.

With present honour and immortal fame,
 Involve the good of all ? An empty form,

Vain is the virtue, that, amid the shade,
 Lamenting lies, with future schemes amused,

While wickedness and folly, kindred powers,
 Confound the world. A Talbot's, different far,
 Sprung into action : action, that disdained
 To lose in living death one pulse of life,
 That might be saved ; disdained, for coward ease
 And her insipid pleasures, to resign
 The prize of glory, the keen sweets of toil,
 And those high joys that teach the truly great
 To live for others, and for others die.

60

Early, behold ! he breaks benign on life.
 Not breathing more beneficence, the spring
 Leads in her swelling train the gentle airs :
 While gay, behind her, smiles the kindling waste
 Of ruffian storms and winter's lawless rage.
 In him Astrea, to this dim abode
 Of ever-wandering men, returned again :
 To bless them his delight, to bring them back
 From thorny error, from unjoyous wrong,
 Into the paths of kind primeval faith,
 Of happiness and justice. All his parts,
 His virtues all, collected, sought the good
 Of humankind. For that he, fervent, felt
 The throb of patriots, when they model states :
 Anxious for that, nor needful sleep could hold
 His still-awakened soul ; nor friends had charms
 To steal, with pleasing guile, an healing hour ;
 Toil knew no languor, no attraction joy.
 The common father such of erring men,
 A froward race, incessant in pursuit
 Of flying good, or of fallacious bliss ;
 Still as they thwart and mingle in the chase,
 Now fraud, now force, now cruelty and crimes,
 Attempting all to seize a brother's prize ;
 He sits superior to the little fray,
 Detects the legal snares of mazy guile,
 With the proud mighty bids the feeble cope.

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And into social life the villain daunts.
Be named, victorious ravagers, no more !
Vanish, ye human comets : shrink your blaze !
Ye that your glory to your terrors owe,
As, o'er the gazing desolated earth,
You scatter famine, pestilence, and war ; 100
Vanish before this vernal sun of fame ;
Effulgent sweetness, beaming life and joy !

How the heart listened while he, pleading, spoke !
While on the enlightened mind, with winning art,
His gentle reason so persuasive stole,
That the charmed hearer thought it was his own.
Ah ! when, ye studious of the laws, again
Shall such enchanting lessons bless your ear ?
When shall again the darkest truths, perplexed,
Be set in ample day ? Again the harsh 110
And arduous open into smiling ease ?
The solid mix with elegant delight ?
To him the purest eloquence indulged
Eternal treasure, light and heat combined,
At once to pour conviction on the soul,
And mould, with lawful flame, the impassioned
heart.

That dangerous gift, which to the strictly just,
And good alone, belongs, lay safe with him
Reposed. He, sacred to his country's cause,
To trampled want and worth, to suffering right, 120
To the lone widow's and her orphan's woes,
Reserved the mighty charm. With equal brow,
Despising then the smiles or frowns of power,
He all that noblest eloquence effused,
Which wakes the tender or exalting tear,
When generous passions, taught by reason, speak.
Then spoke the man : and, over barren art,
Prevailed abundant nature. Freedom then
His client was, humanity and truth.

Placed on the seat of justice, there he reigned, 130
In a superior sphere of cloudless day,
A pure intelligence. No tumult there,
No dark emotion, no intemperate heat.
No passion e'er disturbed the clear serene
That round him spread. A zeal for right alone,
The love of justice, like the steady sun,
Unabating ardour lent ; and now and then,
Against the sons of violence, of pride,
And bold deceit, his indignation gleamed,
As intuition quick, he snatched the truth ; 140
Yet with progressive patience, step by step,
Self-diffident, or to the slower kind,
He through the maze of falsehood urged it on,
Till, at the last, evolved, it full appeared,
And even the loser owned the just decree.

But when, in senates, he, to freedom firm,
Enlightened freedom, planned salubrious laws,
His various learning, his wide knowledge, then,
His insight deep into Britannia's weal,
Spontaneous seemed from simple sense to flow, 150
And the plain patriot smoothed the brow of law.
No specious swell, no frothy pomp of words
Fell on the cheated ear ; no studied maze
Of declamation, to perplex the right,
He darkening threw around : safe in itself, 160
In its own force, almighty reason spoke ;
While on the great the ruling point, at once,
He streamed decisive day, and showed it vain
To lengthen farther out the clear debate.
Conviction breathes conviction ; to the heart,
Poured ardent forth in eloquence unbid,
The heart attends : for let the venal try
Their every hardening stupifying art,
Truth must prevail, zeal will enkindle zeal,
And nature, skilful touched, is honest still.

Behold him in the councils of his prince.
 What faithful light he lends ! How rare, in courts,
 Such wisdom, such abilities, and joined
 To virtue so determined, public zeal,
 And honour of such adamantine proof, 170
 As even corruption, hopeless and o'erawed,
 Durst not have tempted ; yet of manners mild,
 And winning every heart, he knew to please,
 Nobly to please ; while equally he scorned
 Or adulation to receive, or give.
 Happy the state, where wakes a ruling eye
 Of such inspection keen, and general care.
 Beneath a guard so vigilant, so pure,
 All trusted, all-revered, and all-beloved,
 Toil may resign his careless head to rest, 180
 And ever-jealous freedom sleep in peace.
 Ah ! lost untimely, lost in downward days,
 And many a patriot-counsel with him lost !
 Counsels, that might have humbled Britain's foe,
 Her native foe, from eldest time by fate
 Appointed, as did once a Talbot's arms.

Let learning, arts, let universal worth,
 Lament a patron lost, a friend and judge,
 Unlike the sons of vanity, that, veiled
 Beneath the paton's prostituted name, 190
 Dare sacrifice a worthy man to pride,
 And flush confusion o'er an honest cheek.
 Obliged when he obliged, it seemed a debt
 Which he to merit, to the public, paid,
 That can alone, by virtue, stationed high,
 Recover fame ; to his own heart a debt
 And to the great all-bounteous source of good !
 The gracious flood, that cheers the lettered world,
 Is not the noisy gift of summer's noon,
 Whose sudden current, from the naked root, 200
 Washes the little soil which yet remained,

And only more dejects the blushing flowers.
 No, 'tis the soft-descending dews at eve,
 The silent treasures of the vernal year,
 Indulging deep their stores, the still night long ;
 Till, with returning morn, the freshened world,
 Is fragrance all, all beauty, joy, and song.

Still let me view him in the pleasing light
 Of private life, where pomp forgets to glare,
 And where the plain unguarded soul is seen. 210
 Not only there most amiable, best,
 But with that truest greatness he appeared,
 Which thinks not of appearing ; kindly veiled
 In the soft graces of the friendly scene,
 Inspiring social confidence and ease.
 As free the converse of the wise and good,
 As joyous, disentangling every power,
 And breathing mixed improvement with delight,
 As when amid the various-blossomed spring,
 Or gentle beaming autumn's pensive shade, 220
 The philosophic mind with nature talks.
 Say ye, his sons, his dear remains, with whom
 The father laid superfluous state aside,
 Yet swelled your filial duty thence the more,
 With friendship swelled it, with esteem, with love,
 Beyond the ties of blood, oh ! speak the joy,
 The pure serene, the cheerful wisdom mild,
 The virtuous spirit, which his vacant hours,
 In semblance of amusement, through the breast
 Infused. And thou, Oh Rundle ! lend thy strain, 230
 Thou darling friend, thou brother of his soul !
 In whom the head and heart their stores unite :
 Whatever fancy paints, invention pours,
 Judgment digests, the well-tuned bosom feels,
 Truth natural, moral or divine, has taught,
 The virtues dictate, or the muses sing.
 Lend me the plaint, which, to the lonely main,

With memory conversing, you will pour,
 As on the pebbled shore you, pensive, stray,
 Where Derry's mountains a bleak crescent form, 240
 And mid their ample round receive the waves,
 That from the frozen pole, resounding, rush
 Impetuous. Though from native sunshine driven,
 Driven from your friends, the sunshine of the soul,
 By slanderous zeal, and politics infirm,
 Jealous of worth ; yet will you bless your lot,
 Yet will you triumph in your glorious fate,
 Whence Talbot's friendship glows to future times,
 Intrepid, warm ; of kindred tempers born ;
 Nursed by experience, into slow esteem ; 250
 Calm confidence unbounded, love not blind,
 And the sweet light from mingled minds disclosed,
 From mingled chymic oils as bursts the fire.

I too remember well that cheerful bowl,
 Which round his table flowed. The serious there
 Mixed with the sportive, with the learned the plain ;
 Mirth softened wisdom, candour tempered mirth ;
 And wit its honey lent, without the sting.
 Not simple nature's unaffected sons,
 The blameless Indians, round their forest cheer, 260
 In sunny lawn or shady covert set,
 Hold more unspotted converse ; nor, of old,
 Rome's awful consuls, her dictator-swains,
 As on the product of their Sabine farms
 They fared, with stricter virtue fed the soul :
 Nor yet in Athens, at an Attic meal,
 Where Socrates presided, fairer truth,
 More elegant humanity, more grace,
 Wit more refined, or deeper science reigned.

But far beyond the little vulgar bounds 270
 Of family, of friends, of country, kind,
 By just degrees, and with proportioned flame,

Extended his benevolence : a friend
 To humankind, to parent nature's works.
 Of free access, and of engaging grace,
 Such as a brother to a brother owes,
 He kept an open judging ear for all,
 And spread an open countenance, where smiled
 The fair effulgence of an open heart ;
 While on the rich, the poor, the high, the low, 280
 With equal ray, his ready goodness shone :
 For ' Nothing human foreign was to him.'

Thus to a dread inheritance, my lord,
 And hard to be supported, you succeed :
 But, kept by virtue, as by virtue gained,
 It will, through latest time, enrich your race,
 When grosser wealth shall moulder into dust,
 And with their authors in oblivion sunk
 Vain titles lie, the servile badges oft
 Of mean submission, not the meed of worth. 290
 True genuine honour its large patent holds
 Of all mankind, through every land and age,
 Of universal reason's various sons,
 And even of God himself, sole perfect Judge !
 Who sees with other eyes than flattering men.
 Meantime these noblest honours of the mind
 On rigid terms descend : the high-placed heir,
 Scanned by the public eye, that, with keen gaze,
 Malignant seeks out faults, cannot through life,
 Amid the nameless insects of a court, 300
 If such to life belong, unheeded, steal.
 He must be glorious, or he must be base.
 This truth to you, who merit well to bear
 A name to Britons dear, the officious muse
 May safely sing, and sing without reserve.

Vain were the plaint, and ignorant the tear
 That should a Talbot mourn. Ourselves, indeed,

Our sinking country, humankind enslaved,
We may lament. But let us, grateful, joy
That ere such virtues gave our days to shine, 310
Above the dark abyss of modern time,
That we such virtues knew, such virtues felt,
And feel them still, teaching our views to rise
Through ever-brightening scenes of future worlds.
Be dumb, ye worst of zealots ; ye that, prone
To thoughtless dust, renounce that generous hope,
Whence every joy below its spirit draws,
And every pain its balm : a Talbot's light,
A Talbot's virtues claim another source
Than the blind maze of undesigned blood ; 320
Nor when that vital fountain plays no more,
Can they be quenched amid the gelid stream.

Methinks I see his mounting spirit, freed
From tangling earth, regain the realms of day,
Its native country : whence to bless mankind,
Eternal goodness on this darksome spot
Had rayed it down a while. Behold ! approved
By the tremendous Judge of heaven and earth,
And to the Almighty Father's presence joined,
Whose smile creative beams superior life, 330
He takes his rank, in glory, and in bliss,
Amid the human worthies. Glad around
Crowd his compatriot shades, and point him out,
With noble pride, Britannia's blameless boast.
Ah ! who is he, that with a fonder eye
Meets thine enraptured ? 'Tis the best of sons !
The best of friends ! Too soon is realized
That hope, which once forbade thy tears to flow !
Meanwhile the kindred souls of every land
(Howe'er divided in the fretful days 340
Of prejudice and error) mingled now,
In one selected never-jarring state,
Where God himself their only Monarch reigns,

Partake the joy ; yet, such the sense that still
 Remains of earthly woes, for us below,
 And for our loss, they drop a pitying tear.
 But cease, presumptuous muse, not vainly strive
 To quit this cloudy sphere, that binds thee down :
 'Tis not for mortal hand to trace these scenes,
 Scenes, that our gross ideas grovelling cast 350
 Behind, and strike our boldest language dumb.

Forgive, immortal shade ! if aught from earth,
 From dust, low-warbled, to those groves can rise,
 Where flows unbidden harmony, forgive
 This fond superfluous verse. With deep-felt voice,
 On every heart impressed, thy deeds themselves
 Attest thy praise. Thy praise the widow's sighs,
 And orphan's tears embalm. The good, the bad,
 The sons of justice and the sons of strife,
 All that or freedom or that interest prize, 360
 A deep-divided nation's parties all,
 Conspire to swell thy spotless praise to Heaven.
 They catch it there ; and, to seraphic lyre,
 Celestial voices thy arrival hail.
 How vain this tribute then, this lowly lay ;
 Yet nothing vain which gratitude inspires.
 The muse, besides, her duty thus approves
 To virtue, to her country, to mankind,
 To forming nature, that, in glorious charge,
 As to her priestess, has it given to hymn 370
 Whatever good and excellent she forms.

AN ELEGY UPON JAMES THERBURN

IN CHATTO

Now, Chatto, you're a dreary place,
Pale sorrow broods on ilka face
Therburn has run his race,
And now, and now, ah me, alas !

The carl lies dead.

Having his paternoster said,
He took a dram and went to bed ;
He fell asleep, and death was glad
That he had catched him ;
For Therburn was e'en ill bested,
That none did watch him.

For had the carl but been aware,
That meagre death, who none does spare,
T'attempt sic things should ever dare,
As stop his pipe ;
He might have come to flee or skare :
The greedy gipe.

How he'd had but a gill or twae
Death wou'd nae got the victory sae,
Nor put poor Therburn o'er the brae,
Into the grave ;

• • • • • • • • •
The fumbling fellow, some folks say,
Should be jobbed on baith night and day ;
She had without'en better play,
Remained still,
Barren for ever and for aye,
Do what he will.

Therefore they say he got some help
 In getting of the little whelp ;
 But passing that, it makes me yelp,
 But what remead ?
 Death lent him sic a cursed skelp,
 That now he's dead.

Therburn, for evermore farewell,
 And be thy grave baith dry and deep ;
 And rest thy carcass soft and well.
 Free from
 no night
 Disturb

PSALM CIV PARAPHRASED

To praise thy Author, soul, do not forget ;
 Canst thou, in gratitude, deny the debt ?
 Lord, Thou art great, how great we cannot know ;
 Honour and majesty do round Thee flow. []
 The purest rays of primogenial light
 Compose Thy robes, and make them dazzling bright ;
 The heavens and all the widespread orbs on high
 Thou like a curtain stretched of curious dye ;
 On the devouring flood Thy chambers are
 Established ; a lofty cloud's Thy car ; 10
 Which quick through the ethereal road doth fly,
 On swift winged winds, that shake the troubled sky.
 Of spiritual substance angels Thou didst frame,
 Active and bright, piercing and quick as flame.
 Thou'st firmly founded this unwieldy earth ;
 ' Stand fast for aye ', Thou saidst, at nature's birth .
 The swelling flood Thou o'er the earth madest creep,
 And coveredst it with the vast hoary deep.
 Then hills and vales did no distinction know,
 But levelled nature lay oppressed below. 20
 With speed they, at Thy awful thunder's roar,

Shrunkèd within the limits of their shore.
 Through secret tracts they up the mountains creep,
 And rocky caverns fruitful moisture weep,
 Which sweetly through the verdant vales doth glide,
 Till 'tis devoured by the greedy tide.
 The feeble sands Thou'st made the ocean's mounds ;
 Its foaming waves shall ne'er repass these bounds,
 Again to triumph over the dry grounds.
 Between the hills, grazed by the bleating kind, 30
 Soft warbling rills their mazy way do find ;
 By Him appointed fully to supply,
 When the hot dog-star fires the realms on high,
 The raging thirst of every sickening beast,
 Of the wild ass that roams the dreary waste :
 The feathered nation, by their smiling sides,
 In lowly brambles, or in trees abides ;
 By nature taught, on them they rear their nests,
 That with inimitable art are dressed.
 They for the shade and safety of the wood 40
 With natural music cheer the neighbourhood.
 He doth the clouds with genial moisture fill,
 Which on the shrivelled ground they bounteously distil,
 And nature's lap with various blessings crowd :
 The giver, God ! all creatures cry aloud.
 With freshest green He clothes the fragrant mead,
 Whereon the grazing herds wanton and feed.
 With vital juice He makes the plants abound,
 And herbs securely spring above the ground,
 That man may be sustained beneath the toil 50
 Of manuring the ill-producing soil ;
 Which with a plenteous harvest does at last
 Cancel the memory of labours past ;
 Yields him the product of the generous vine,
 And balmy oil that makes his face to shine :
 Fills all his granaries with a loaden crop,
 Against the bare barren winter his great prop.
 The trees of God with kindly sap do swell,

E'en cedars tall in Lebanon that dwell,
 Upon whose lofty tops the birds erect
 Their nests, as careful nature does direct. 60
 The long-necked storks unto the fir trees fly,
 And with their crackling cries disturb the sky.
 To unfrequented hills wild goats resort,
 And on bleak rocks the nimble conies sport.
 The changing moon He clad with silver light,
 To check the black dominion of the night :
 High through the skies in silent state she rides, .
 And by her rounds the fleeting time divides.
 The circling sun doth in due time decline, 70
 And unto shades the murmuring world resign.
 Dark night Thou makest succeed the cheerful day,
 Which forest beasts from their lone caves survey :
 They rouse themselves, creep out, and search their
 prey.
 Young hungry lions from their dens come out,
 And, mad on blood, stalk fearfully about :
 They break night's silence with their hideous roar,
 And from kind heaven their nightly prey implore.
 Just as the lark begins to stretch her wing,
 And, flickering on her nest, make short essays to
 sing, 80
 And the sweet dawn, with a faint glimmering light,
 Unveils the face of nature to the sight,
 To their dark dens they take their hasty flight.
 Not so the husbandman,—for with the sun
 He does his pleasant course of labours run :
 Home with content in the cool e'en returns,
 And his sweet toils until the morn adjourns.
 How many are Thy wondrous works, O Lord !
 They of Thy wisdom solid proofs afford :
 Out of Thy boundless goodness Thou didst fill, 90
 With riches and delights, both vale and hill :
 Even the broad ocean, wherein do abide
 Monsters that flounce upon the boiling tide,

And swarms of lesser beasts and fish beside :
'Tis there that daring ships before the wind
Do scud amain, and make the port assigned :
'Tis there that leviathan sports and plays,
And spouts his water in the face of day ;
For food with gaping mouth they wait on Thee,
If Thou withhold'st, they pine, they faint, they die. 100
Thou bountifully opest Thy liberal hand,
And scatterest plenty both on sea and land.
Thy vital Spirit makes all things live below,
The face of nature with new beauties glow.
God's awful glory ne'er will have an end,
To vast eternity it will extend.
When He surveys His works, at the wide sight
He doth rejoice, and take divine delight.
His looks the earth into its centre shakes ;
A touch of His to smoke the mountains makes. 110
I'll to God's honour consecrate my lays,
And when I cease to be I'll cease to praise.
Upon the Lord, a sublime lofty theme,
My meditation's sweet, my joy's supreme.
Let daring sinners feel Thy vengeful rod,
May they no more be known by their abode.
My soul and all my powers, Oh bless the Lord,
And the whole race of men with one accord.

A PARAPHRASE

ON THE LATTER PART OF THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST MATTHEW

WHEN my breast labours with oppressive care,
And o'er my cheek descends the falling tear ;
While all my warring passions are at strife,
Oh, let me listen to the words of life !
Raptures deep-felt His doctrine did impart,
And thus He loved to cheer the lonely heart.

' Think not, when all your scanty stores afford
 Is spread at once upon the sparing board ;
 Think not, when worn the homely robe appears,
 While, on the roof, the howling tempest bears ;
 What farther shall this feeble life sustain,
 And what shall clothe these shivering limbs again.
 Say, does not life its nourishment exceed ?
 And the fair body its investing weed ?

Behold ! and look away your low despair—
 See the light tenants of the barren air :
 To them, nor stores, nor granaries belong,
 Nought, but the woodland, and the pleasing song ;
 Yet, your kind heavenly Father bends His eye
 On the least wing that flits along the sky.
 To Him they sing, when spring renews the plain,
 To Him they cry, in winter's pinching reign ;
 Nor is their music, nor their plaint in vain.
 He hears the gay and the distressful call,
 And with unsparing bounty fills them all.

Observe the rising lily's snowy grace ;
 Observe the various vegetable race ;
 They neither toil, nor spin, but careless grow ;
 Yet see how warm they blush ! how bright they glow !
 What regal vestments can with them compare,
 What king so shining, and what queen so fair ?

If, ceaseless, thus the fowls of heaven He feeds,
 If o'er the fields such lucid robes He spreads ;
 Will He not care for you, ye faithless, say ?
 Is He unwise, or are ye less than they ?'

FRAGMENT OF A POEM ON THE WORKS AND
WONDERS OF ALMIGHTY POWER
SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN ON A SUMMER NIGHT IN A
GARDEN

Now I surveyed my native faculties,
And traced my actions to their teeming source.
Now I explored the universal frame ;
Gazed nature through, and, with interior light,
Conversed with angels and unbodied saints,
That tread the courts of the Eternal King !
Gladly would I declare, in lofty strains,
The power of Godhead to the sons of men.
But thought is lost in its immensity ;
Imagination wastes its strength in vain ;
And fancy tires, and turns within itself,
Struck with the amazing depths of Deity !

Ah ! my loved God ! in vain a tender youth,
Unskilled in arts of deep philosophy,
Attempts to search the bulky mass of matter ;
To trace the rules of motion ; and pursue
The phantom time, too subtle for his grasp !
Yet may I, from Thy most apparent works,
Form some idea of their wondrous Author,
And celebrate Thy praise with rapturous mind !

How can I gaze upon yon sparkling vault,
And view the planets rolling in their spheres,
Yet be an atheist ? Can I see those stars,
And think of others far beyond my ken,
Yet want conviction of creating power ?
What but a Being of immense perfection
Could, through unbounded spaces, thus dispose
Such numerous bodies, all presumptive worlds ?
The undesigning hand of giddy chance
Could never fill, with globes so vast, so bright,
That lofty concave !

Where shall I trace the sources of the light ?
 What seats assign to the element of fire,
 That, unconfined, through all the systems breaks ?
 Here could I lie, in contemplation wrapped,
 And pass with pleasure an eternal age !
 But 'tis too much for my weak mind to know :
 Teach me, with humble reverence, to adore
 The mysteries I must not comprehend !

HYMN TO GOD'S POWER

HAIL ! Power Divine, Who by Thy sole command,
 From the dark empty space,
 Made the broad sea and solid land
 Smile with a heavenly grace ;

Made the high mountain and firm rock,
 Where bleating cattle stray ;
 And the strong, stately, spreading oak,
 That intercepts the day.

The rolling planets Thou madest move,
 By Thy effective will ;
 And the revolving globes above
 Their destined course fulfil.

His mighty power, ye thunders, praise,
 As through the heavens you roll ;
 And His great name, ye lightnings, blaze,
 Unto the distant pole.

Ye seas, in your eternal roar,
 His sacred praise proclaim ;
 While the inactive sluggish shore
 Re-echoes to the same.

Ye howling winds, howl out His praise,
And make the forests bow ;
While through the air, the earth, and seas,
His solemn praise ye blow.

O yon high harmonious spheres,
Your powerful Mover sing ;
To Him your circling course that steers,
Your tuneful praises bring.

Ungrateful mortals, catch the sound,
And in your numerous lays,
To all the listening world around,
The God of nature praise.

A PASTORAL

BETWIXT DAVID, THIRYSIS, AND THE ANGEL GABRIEL, UPON THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOUR

DAVID

WHAT means yon apparition in the sky,
Thirsis, that dazzles every shepherd's eye ?
I slumbering was when from yon glorious cloud
Came gliding music heavenly, sweet, and loud,
With sacred raptures which my bosom fires,
And with celestial joy my soul inspires ;
It soothes the native horrors of the night,
And gladdens nature more than dawning light.

THIRYSIS

But hold, see hither through the yielding air
An angel comes : for mighty news prepare.

ANGEL GABRIEL

Rejoice, ye swains, anticipate the morn
With songs of praise ; for lo ! a Saviour's born.

A PASTORAL

With joyful haste to Bethlehem repair,
 And you will find the almighty Infant there ;
 Wrapped in a swaddling band you'll find your King,
 And in a manger laid, to Him your praises bring.

CHORUS OF ANGELS

To God who in the highest dwells,
 Immortal glory be ;
 Let peace be in the humble cells
 Of Adam's progeny.

DAVID

No more the year shall wintry horrors bring ;
 Fixed in the indulgence of eternal spring,
 Immortal green shall clothe the hills and vales,
 And odorous sweets shall load the balmy gales ;
 The silver brooks shall in soft murmurs tell
 The joy that shall their oozy channels swell.
 Feed on, my flocks, and crop the tender grass,
 Let blooming joy appear on every face ;
 For lo ! this blessed, this propitious morn,
 The Saviour of lost mankind is born.

THIRYSIS

Thou fairest morn that ever sprang from night.
 Or decked the opening skies with rosy light,
 Well mayest thou shine with a distinguished ray,
 Since here Emmanuel condescends to stay ;
 Our fears, our guilt, our darkness to dispel,
 And save us from the horrid jaws of hell.
 Who from His throne descended, matchless love !
 To guide poor mortals to blest seats above :
 But come without delay, let us be gone,
 Shepherd, let's go, and humbly kiss the Son.

ON BEAUTY

BEAUTY deserves the homage of the muse :
 Shall mine, rebellious, the dear theme refuse ?
 No ; while my breast respires the vital air,
 Wholly I am devoted to the fair.

Beauty I'll sing in my sublimest lays,
 I burn to give her just immortal praise.
 The heavenly maid with transport I'll pursue
 To her abode, and all her graces view.

This happy place with all delights abounds
 And plenty broods upon the fertile grounds.

10

Here verdant grass their waving
 And hills and vales in sweet confusion lie :
 The nibbling flock stray o'er the rising hills,
 And all around with bleating music fills :
 High on their fronts tall blooming forests nod,
 Of sylvan deities the blest abode :

The feathered minstrels hop from spray to spray,
 And chant their gladsome carols all the day ;
 Till dusky night, advancing in her car,
 Makes with declining light successful war.

20

Then Philomel her mournful lay repeats,
 And through her throat breathes melancholy sweets.
 Still higher yet wild rugged rocks arise,
 And strike beholders with a dread surprise.
 This paradise these towering hills surround,
 That thither is one only passage found.
 Increasing brooks roll down the mountain's side,
 And as they pass the opposing pebbles chide.

But vernal showers refresh the blooming year.
 Their only season is eternal spring,
 Which hovers o'er them with a downy wing :
 Blossoms and fruits at once the trees adorn

30

With glowing blushes, like the rosy morn.
The way that to this stately palace goes
Of myrtle trees, lies 'twixt two even rows,
Which, towering high, with outstretched arms displayed,
Over our heads a living arch have made.
To sing, my muse, the bold attempt begin,
Of awful beauties you behold within :
The goddess sat upon a throne of gold, 40
Embossed with figures charming to behold ;
Here new-made Eve stood in her early bloom,
Not yet obscurèd with sin's sullen gloom ;
Her naked beauties do the soul confound,
From every part is given a fatal wound ;
There other beauties of a meaner fame
Oblige the sight, whom here I shall not name.
In her right hand she did a sceptre sway,
O'er all mankind ambitious to obey :
Her lovely forehead and her killing eye, 50
Her blushing cheeks of a vermillion dye,
Her lip's soft pulp, her heaving snowy breast,
Her well-turned arm, her handsome slender waist,
And all below veiled from the curious eye ;
Oh ! heavenly maid ! makes all beholders cry.
Her dress was plain, not pompous as a bride,
Which would her sweeter native beauties hide.
One thing I mind, a spreading hoop she wore,
Than nothing which adorns a lady more.
With equal rage, could I its beauties sing, 60
I'd with the hoop make all Parnassus ring.
Around her shoulders, dangling on her throne,
A bright tartana carelessly was thrown,
Which has already won immortal praise,
Most sweetly sung in Allan Ramsay's lays ;
The wanton cupids did around her play,
And smiling loves upon her bosom stray ;
With purple wings they round about her flew,
And her sweet lips tinged with ambrosial dew :

Her air was easy, graceful was her mien,
70
 Her presence banished the ungrateful spleen ;
 In short, her divine influence refined
 Our corrupt hearts, and polishèd mankind.
 Of lovely nymphs she had a smiling train,
 Fairer than those e'er graced Arcadia's plain.
 The British ladies next to her took place,
 Who chiefly did the fair assembly grace.
 What blooming virgins can Britannia boast,
 Their praises would all eloquence exhaust.
 With ladies there my ravished eyes did meet,
80
 That oft I've seen grace fair Edina's street,
 With their broad hoops cut through the willing air,
 Pleased to give place unto the lovely fair :
 Sure this is like those blissful seats above,
 Here is peace, transporting joy, and love.
 Should I be doomed by cruel angry fate
 In some lone isle my lingering end to wait,
 Yet happy I ! still happy should I be !
 While blest with virtue and a charming she ;
 With full content I'd fortune's pride despise.
90
 And die still gazing on her lovely eyes.
 May all the blessings mortals need below,
 May all the blessings heaven can bestow,
 May everything that's pleasant, good, or rare,
 Be the eternal portion of the fair.

AN ODE ON ÆOLUS'S HARP

ETHEREAL race, inhabitants of air !
 Who hymn your God amid the secret grove ;
 Ye unseen beings, to my harp repair,
 And raise majestic strains, or melt in love.

Those tender notes, how kindly they upbraid,
 With what soft woe they thrill the lover's heart !

Sure from the hand of some unhappy maid,
Who died of love, these sweet complainings part.

But hark ! that strain was of a graver tone,
On the deep strings his hand some hermit throws ;
Or he, the sacred bard who sat alone
In the drear waste, and wept his people's woes.

Such was the song which Zion's children sung,
When by Euphrates' stream they made their plaint;
And to such sadly solemn notes are strung
Angelic harps, to soothe a dying saint.

Methinks I hear the full celestial choir,
Through heaven's high dome their awful anthem
raise ;
Now chanting clear, and now they all conspire
To swell the lofty hymn from praise to praise.

Let me, ye wandering spirits of the wind,
Who, as wild fancy prompts you, touch the string,
Smite with your theme, be in your chorus joined,
For till you cease, my muse forgets to sing.

ON HAPPINESS

WARMED by the summer sun's meridian ray,
As underneath a spreading oak I lay
Contemplating the mighty load of woe,
In search of bliss that mortals undergo,
Who, while they think they happiness enjoy,
Embrace a curse wrapped in delusive joy,
I reasoned thus : since the Creator, God,
Who in eternal love has His abode,

Hath blended with the essence of the soul
 An appetite as fixèd as the pole, 10
 That's always eager in pursuit of bliss,
 And always veering till it point to this,
 There is some object adequate to fill
 This boundless wish of our extended will.
 Now, while my thought round nature's circle runs
 (A bolder journey than the furious sun's)
 This chief and satiating good to find
 The attracting centre of the human mind,
 My ears they deafened, to my swimming eyes
 His magic wand the drowsy god applies, 20
 Bound all my senses in a silken sleep,
 While mimic fancy did her vigils keep ;
 Yet still methinks some condescending power
 Ranged the ideas in my mind that hour.

Methought I wandering was, with thousands more,
 Beneath a high prodigious hill, before,
 Above the clouds whose towering summit rose,
 With utmost labour only gained by those
 Who grovelling prejudices throw away,
 And with incessant straining climbed their way ; 30
 Where all who stood their failing breath to gain,
 With headlong ruin tumbled down amain.
 This mountain is through every nation famed,
 And, as I learnèd, contemplation named.
 Oh happy me ! when I had reached its top
 Unto my sight a boundless scene did ope.

First, sadly I surveyed with downward eye,
 Of restless men below the busy fry,
 Who hunted trifles in an endless maze,
 Like foolish boys, on sunny summer days,
 Pursuing butterflies with all their might, 40
 Who can't their troubles in the chase requite.
 The painted insect, he who most admires,

Grieves most when it in his rude hand expires ;
 Or should it live, with endless fears is tossed,
 Lest it take wing and be for ever lost.

Some men I saw their utmost art employ
 How to attain a false deceitful joy,
 Which from afar conspicuously did blaze,
 And at a distance fixed their ravished gaze ; 50
 But nigh at hand it mocked their fond embrace.
 When lo ! again it flashèd in their eyes,
 But still, as they drew near, the fond illusion dies.
 Just so I've seen a water-dog pursue
 An unflown duck within his greedy view.
 When he has, panting, at his prey arrived,
 The coxcomb fooling—suddenly it dived ;
 He, gripping, is almost with water choked,
 And grieves that all his towering hopes are mocked. 60
 Then it emerges, he renews his toil,
 And o'er and o'er again he gets the foil.
 Yea, all the joys beneath the conscious sun,
 And softer ones that his inspection shun,
 Much of their pleasures in fruition fade :
 Enjoyment o'er them throws a sullen shade.
 The reason is, we promise vaster things
 And sweeter joys than from their nature springs :
 When they are lost, we weep the apparent bliss,
 And not what really in fruition is ;
 So that our griefs are greater than our joys, 70
 And real pain springs from fantastic toys.

Though all terrene delights of men below
 Are almost nothing but a glaring show ;
 Yet if there always were a virgin joy,
 When t'other fades, to soothe the wanton boy,
 He somewhat might excuse his heedless course,
 Some show of reason for the same enforce :
 But frugal nature wisely does deny

To mankind such profuse variety ;
 Has what is needful only to us given,
 To feed and cheer us in the way to heaven ;
 And more would but the traveller delay,
 Impede and clog him in his upward way.

80

I from the mount all mortal pleasures saw
 Themselves within a narrow compass draw :
 The libertine a nauseous circle run,
 And dully acted what he'd often done.
 Just so when Luna darts her silver ray,
 And pours on silent earth a paler day :
 From Stygian caves the flitting fairies scud,
 And on the margin of some limpid flood,
 Which by reflected moonlight darts a glance,
 In midnight circles range themselves and dance.

90

‘To-morrow’, cries he, ‘will us entertain :’
 Pray what’s to-morrow but to-day again ?
 Deluded youth, no more the chase pursue,
 So oft deceived, no more the toil renew.
 But in a constant and a fixed design
 Of acting well there is a lasting mine
 Of solid satisfaction, purest joy,
 For virtue’s pleasures never, never cloy.
 Then hither come, climb up the steep ascent,
 Your painful labour you will ne’er repent,
 From heaven itself here you’re but one remove,
 Here’s the præludium of the joys above,
 Here you’ll behold the awful Godhead shine,
 And all perfections in the same combine ;
 You’ll see that God, who, by His powerful call,
 From empty nothing drew this spacious all,
 Made beauteous order the rude mass control,
 And every part subservient to the whole ;
 Here you behold upon that fatal tree
 The God of nature bleed, expire, and die,

100

110

For such as 'gainst His holy laws rebel,
 And such as bid defiance to His hell.
 Through the dark gulf, here you may clearly pry
 'Twixt narrow time and vast eternity.
 Behold the Godhead just, as well as good,
 And vengeance poured on trampers on His blood :
 But all the tears wiped from His people's eyes, 120
 And, for their entrance, cleave the parting skies.
 Then sure you will with holy ardours burn,
 And to seraphic heats your passion turn ;
 Then in your eyes all mortal fair will fade,
 And leave of mortal beauties but the shade ;
 Yourself to Him you'll solemnly devote,
 To Him, without Whose providence you're not ;
 You'll of His service relish the delight,
 And to His praises all your powers excite ;
 You'll celebrate His name in heavenly sound, 130
 Which well-pleased skies in echoes will rebound ;
 This is the greatest happiness that can
 Possessèd be in this short life by man.

But darkly ere the Godhead we survey,
 Confined and crampèd in this cage of clay,
 What cruel band is this to earth that ties
 Our souls from soaring to their native skies :
 Upon the bright Eternal Face to gaze,
 And there drink in the beatific rays :
 There to behold the Good One and the Fair, 140
 A ray from Whom all mortal beauties are ?
 In beauteous nature all the harmony
 Is but the echo of the Deity,
 Of all perfection Who the Centre is,
 And boundless ocean of untainted bliss ;
 For ever open to the ravished view,
 And full enjoyment of the radiant crew
 Who live in raptures of eternal joy,
 Whose flaming love their tuneful harps employ

In solemn hymns Jehovah's praise to sing,
And make all heaven with hallelujahs ring.

150

These realms of light no further I'll explore,
And in these heights I will no longer soar :
Not like our grosser atmosphere beneath,
The ether here's too thin for me to breathe.
The region is unsufferable bright,
And flashes on me with too strong a light.
Then from the mountain, lo ! I now descend,
And to my vision put a hasty end.

THE HAPPY MAN

HE'S not the happy man, to whom is given
A plenteous fortune by indulgent heaven ;
Whose gilded roofs on shining columns rise,
And painted walls enchant the gazer's eyes ;
Whose table flows with hospitable cheer,
And all the various bounty of the year ;
Whose valleys smile, whose gardens breathe the spring,
Whose carved mountains bleat, and forests sing ;
For whom the cooling shade in summer twines,
While his full cellars give their generous wines ;
From whose wide fields unbounded autumn pours
A golden tide into his swelling stores :
Whose winter laughs ; for whom the liberal gales
Stretch the big sheet, and toiling commerce sails ;
When yielding crowds attend, and pleasure serves ;
While youth, and health, and vigour string his nerves.
Even not all these, in one rich lot combined,
Can make the happy man, without the mind ;
Where judgment sits clear-sighted, and surveys
The chain of reason with unerring gaze ;
Where fancy lives, and to the brightening eyes,
Bids fairer scenes, and bolder figures rise ;

Where social love exerts her soft command
 And lays the passions with a tender hand,
 Whence every virtue flows, in rival strife,
 And all the moral harmony of life.

Nor canst thou, D[o]d[ingto]n, this truth decline,
 Thine is the fortune, and the mind is thine.

ON THE HOOP

THE hoop, the darling justly of the fair,
 Of every generous swain deserves the care.
 It is unmanly to desert the weak,
 'Twould urge a stone, if possible, to speak ;
 To hear staunch hpyocrites bawl out, and cry,
 ' This hoop's a whorish garb, fie ! ladies, fie !'
 Oh cruel and audacious men, to blast
 The fame of ladies more than vestals chaste ;
 Should you go search the globe throughout,
 You'll find none so pious and devout ;
 So modest, chaste, so handsome, and so fair,
 As our dear Caledonian ladies are. 10
 When awful beauty puts on all her charms,
 Nought gives our sex such terrible alarms,
 As when the hoop and tartan both combine
 To make a virgin like a goddess shine.
 Let quakers cut their clothes unto the quick,
 And with severities themselves afflict ;
 But may the hoop adorn Edina's street,
 Till the south pole shall with the northern meet. 20

ON MAY

AMONG the changing months, May stands confessed
 The sweetest, and in fairest colours dressed !
 Soft as the breeze that fans the smiling field ;
 Sweet as the breath that opening roses yield ;

Fair as the colour lavish nature paints
On virgin flowers free from unodorous taints !—
To rural scenes thou tempt'st the busy crowd,
Who, in each grove, thy praises sing aloud.
The blooming belles and shallow beaux, strange sight!
Turn nymphs and swains, and in their sports delight.

A COMPLAINT ON THE MISERIES OF LIFE

I LOATHE, O Lord, this life below,
And all its fading fleeting joys ;
'Tis a short space that's filled with woe,
Which all our bliss by far outweighs.
When will the everlasting morn
With dawning light the skies adorn ?

Fitly this life's compared to night,
When gloomy darkness shades the sky ;
Just like the morn's our glimmering light
Reflected from the Deity.
When will celestial morn dispel
These dark surrounding shades of hell ?

I'm sick of this vexatious state,
Where cares invade my peaceful hours ;
Strike the last blow, Oh courteous fate,
I'll smiling fall like mowèd flowers ;
I'll gladly spurn this clogging clay,
And, sweetly singing, soar away.

What's money but refinèd dust ?
What's honours but an empty name ?
And what is soft enticing lust,
But a consuming idle flame ?
Yea, what is all beneath the sky
But emptiness and vanity ?

With thousand ills our life's oppressed,
 There's nothing here worth living for,
 In the lone grave I long to rest,
 And be harassed here no more :
 Where joy's fantastic, grief's sincere,
 And where there's nought for which I care.

Thy word, Oh Lord, shall be my guide,
 Heaven, where Thou dwellest is my goal ;
 Through corrupt life grant I may glide
 With an untainted upward soul.
 Then may this life, this dreary night,
 Dispelled be by morning light.

ODE

O NIGHTINGALE, best poet of the grove,
 That plaintive strain can ne'er belong to thee,
 Blest in the full possession of thy love ;
 Oh lend that strain, sweet nightingale, to me !

'Tis mine, alas ! to mourn my wretched fate :
 I love a maid who all my bosom charms,
 Yet lose my days without this lovely mate ;
 Inhuman fortune keeps her from my arms.

Your happy birds ! by nature's simple laws
 Lead your soft lives, sustained by nature's fare ;
 You dwell wherever roving fancy draws,
 And love and song is all your pleasing care :

But we, vain slaves of interest and of pride,
 Dare not be blest, lest envious tongues should
 blame :
 And hence, in vain, I languish for my bride :
 Oh mourn with me, sweet bird, my hapless flame.

AN ELEGY ON PARTING

It was a sad, ay 'twas a sad farewell,
I still afresh the pangs of parting feel ;
Against my breast my heart impatient beat,
And in deep sighs bemoaned its cruel fate ;
Thus with the object of my love to part,
My life ! my joy ! 'twould rend a rocky heart.

Where'er I turn myself, where'er I go,
I meet the image of my lovely foe ;
With witching charms the phantom still appears,
And with her wanton smiles insults my tears ;
Still haunts the places where we used to walk,
And where with raptures oft I heard her talk :
Those scenes I now with deepest sorrow view,
And sighing bid to all delight adieu.

While I my head upon this turf recline,
Officious sun, in vain on me you shine ;
In vain unto the smiling fields I hie ;
In vain the flowery meads salute my eye ;
In vain the cheerful birds and shepherds sing,
And with their carols make the valleys ring ;
Yea, all the pleasure that the country yield
Can't me from sorrow for her absence shield :
With divine pleasure books which one inspire,
Yea, books themselves I do not now admire.
But hark ! methinks some pitying power I hear,
This welcome message whisper in my ear :
'Forget thy groundless griefs, dejected swain,
You and the nymph you love shall meet again ;
No more your muse shall sing such mournful lays,
But bounteous heaven and your kind mistress praise.'

HYMN ON SOLITUDE

HAIL, ever pleasing Solitude,
 Companion of the wise and good !
 But from whose holy, piercing eye,
 The herds of fools and villains fly.

Oh ! how I love with thee to walk,
 And listen to thy whispered talk,
 Which innocence and truth imparts,
 And melts the most obdurate hearts.

A thousand shapes you wear with ease,
 And still in every shape you please. 10
 Now wrapped in some mysterious dream,
 A lone philosopher you seem ;
 Now quick from hill to vale you fly,
 And now you sweep the vaulted sky ;
 And nature triumphs in your eye.
 Then straight again you court the shade,
 And, pining, hang the pensive head.
 A shepherd next, you haunt the plain,
 And warble forth your oaten strain.
 A lover now with all the grace
 Of that sweet passion in your face ;
 Then soft divided friendship you assume,
 The gentle looking H[ertfor]l's bloom.
 As, with her Philomelia, she
 (Her Philomelia fond of thee)
 Amid the long-withdrawing vale,
 Awakes the rivalled nightingale.

Thine is the unbounded breath of morn,
 Just as the dew-bent rose is born ;
 And while meridian fevers beat,
 Thine is the woodland dumb retreat ;
 But chief, when evening scenes decay,

10

20

30

And the faint landscape swims away,
Thine is the doubtful dear decline,
And that best hour of musing thine.
A thousand shapes you wear with ease,
And still in every shape you please.

Descending angels bless thy train,
The virtues of the sage, and swain ;
Plain innocence, in white arrayed,
And contemplation rears the head ;
Religion with her awful brow,
And rapt Urania waits on you.

40

Oh, let me pierce thy secret cell !
And in thy deep recesses dwell ;
For ever with thy raptures fired,
For ever from the world retired ;
Nor by a mortal seen, save he
A Lycidas or Lycon be.

ON THE REPORT OF A WOODEN BRIDGE

TO BE BUILT AT WESTMINSTER

By Rufus' hall, where Thames polluted flows,
Provoked, the genius of the river rose,
And thus exclaimed : ' Have I, ye British swains,
Have I for ages laved your fertile plains ?
Given herds, and flocks, and villages increase,
And fed a richer than the golden fleece ?
Have I, ye merchants, with each swelling tide,
Poured Afric's treasure in, and India's pride ?
Lent you the fruits of every nation's toil ?
Made every climate yours, and every soil ?
Yet, pilfered from the poor, by gaming base,
Must then a wooden bridge my waves disgrace ?

Tell not to foreign streams the shameful tale,
And be it published in no Gallic vale.'
He said ; and plunged into his crystal dome,
While o'er his head the circling waters foam.

THE MORNING IN THE COUNTRY

WHEN from the opening chambers of the east
The morning springs, in thousand liveries dressed,
The early larks their morning tribute pay.
And, in shrill notes, salute the blooming day.
Refreshèd fields with pearly dew do shine,
And tender blades therewith their tops incline.
Their painted leaves the unblown flowers expand,
And with their odorous breath perfume the land.
The crowing cock and chattering hen awakes
Dull sleepy clowns, who know the morning breaks.
The herd his plaid around his shoulders throws,
Grasps his dear crook, calls on his dog, and goes
Around the fold : he walks with careful pace,
And fallen clods sets in their wonted place ;
Then opes the door, unfolds his fleecy care,
And gladly sees them crop their morning fare.
Down upon easy moss he lays
And sings some charming shepherdess's praise.

OF A COUNTRY LIFE

I HATE the clamours of the smoky towns,
But much admire the bliss of rural clowns ;
Where some remains of innocence appear,
Where no rude noise insults the listening ear ;
Nought but soft zephyrs whispering through the trees,
Or the still humming of the painful bees ;
The gentle murmurs of a purling rill,
Or the unwearied chirping of the drill ;

The charming harmony of warbling birds,
Or hollow lowings of the grazing herds ; 10
The murmuring stockdoves' melancholy coo,
When they their lovèd mates lament or woo ;
The pleasing bleatings of the tender lambs,
Or the indistinct mumbling of their dams ;
The musical discord of chiding hounds,
Whereto the echoing hill or rock resounds ;
The rural mournful songs of love-sick swains,
Whereby they soothe their raging amorous pains ;
The whistling music of the lagging plough,
Which does the strength of drooping beasts renew. 20

And as the country rings with pleasant sounds,
So with delightful prospects it abounds :
Through every season of the sliding year,
Unto the ravished sight new scenes appear.

In the sweet spring the sun's prolific ray
Does painted flowers to the mild air display ;
Then opening birds, then tender herbs are seen,
And the bare fields are all arrayed in green.

In ripening summer, the full laden vales
Gives prospect of employment for the flails ; 30
Each breath of wind the bearded groves makes bend,
Which seems the fatal sickle to portend.

In autumn, that repays the labourer's pains,
Reapers sweep down the honours of the plains.

Anon black winter, from the frozen north,
Its treasures of snow and hail pours forth ;
Then stormy winds blow through the hazy sky,
In desolation nature seems to lie ;
The unstained snow from the full clouds descends,
Whose sparkling lustre open eyes offends. 40

In maiden white the glittering fields do shine ;
 Then bleating flocks for want of food repine.
 With withered eyes they see all snow around,
 And with their forefeet paw and scrape the ground :
 They cheerfully do crop the insipid grass,
 The shepherds sighing, cry, Alas ! alas !
 Then pinching want the wildest beast does tame ;
 Then huntsmen on the snow do trace their game ;
 Keen frost then turns the liquid lakes to glass,
 Arrests the dancing rivulets as they pass.

50

How sweet and innocent are country sports,
 And, as men's tempers, various are their sorts.

You, on the banks of soft meandering Tweed,
 May in your toils ensnare the watery breed,
 And nicely lead the artificial flee,
 Which, when the nimble, watchful trout does see,
 He at the bearded hook will briskly spring :
 Then in that instant twitch your hairy string,
 And, when he's hooked, you, with a constant hand,
 May draw him struggling to the fatal land.

60

Then at fit seasons you may clothe your hook,
 With a sweet bait, dressed by a faithless cook ;
 The greedy pike darts to't with eager haste,
 And, being struck, in vain he flies at last ;
 He rages, storms, and flounces through the stream,
 But all, alas ! his life cannot redeem.

At other times you may pursue the chase,
 And hunt the nimble hare from place to place.
 See, when the dog is just upon the grip,
 Out at a side she'll make a handsome skip,
 And ere he can divert his furious course,
 She, far before him, scours with all her force :
 She'll shift, and many times run the same ground ;

70

At last, outworned by the stronger hound,
She falls a sacrifice unto his hate,
And with sad piteous scream laments her fate.

See how the hawk doth take his towering flight,
And in his course out-fies our very sight,
Beats down the fluttering fowl with all his might.

See how the wary gunner casts about, 80
Watching the fittest posture when to shoot :
Quick as the fatal lightning blasts the oak,
He gives the springing fowl a sudden stroke ;
He pours upon't a shower of mortal lead,
And ere the noise is heard the fowl is dead.

Sometimes he spreads his hidden subtle snare,
Of which the entangled fowl was not aware ;
Through pathless wastes he doth pursue his sport,
Where nought but moor-fowl and wild beasts resort.

When the noon sun directly darts his beams 90
Upon your giddy heads, with fiery gleams,
Then you may bathe yourself in cooling streams ;
Or to the sweet adjoining grove retire,
Where trees with interwoven boughs conspire
To form a grateful shade ;—there rural swains
Do tune their oaten reeds to rural strains ;
The silent birds sit listening on the sprays,
And in soft charming notes do imitate their lays.
There you may stretch yourself upon the grass,
And, lulled with music, to kind slumbers pass : 100
No meagre cares your fancy will distract,
And on that scene no tragic fears will act ;
Save the dear image of a charming she,
Nought will the object of your vision be.

Away the vicious pleasures of the town ;
Let empty partial fortune on me frown ;
But grant, ye powers, that it may be my lot
To live in peace from noisy towns remote.

LINES ON MARLEFIELD

WHAT is the task that to the muse belongs ?
What but to deck in her harmonious songs
The beauteous works of nature and of art,
Rural retreats that cheer the heavy heart ?
Then Marlefield begin, my muse, and sing ;
With Marlefield the hills and vales shall ring.
Oh ! what delight and pleasure 'tis to rove
Through all the walks and alleys of this grove,
Where spreading trees a checkered scene display,
Partly admitting and excluding day ;
Where cheerful green and odorous sweets conspire
The drooping soul with pleasure to inspire ;
Where little birds employ their narrow throats
To sing its praises in unlaboured notes.
To it adjoined a rising fabric stands,
Which with its state our silent awe commands.
Its endless beauties mock the poet's pen ;
So to the garden I'll return again.
Pomona makes the trees with fruit abound,
And blushing Flora paints the enamelled ground.
Here lavish nature does her stores disclose,
Flowers of all hue, their queen the bashful rose,
With their sweet breath the ambient air's perfumed,
Nor is thereby their fragrant stores consumed.
O'er the fair landscape sportive zephyrs scud,
And by kind force display the infant bud.
The vegetable kind here rear their head,
By kindly showers and heaven's indulgence fed :
Of fabled nymphs such were the sacred haunts,
But real nymphs this charming dwelling vaunts.
Now to the greenhouse let's awhile retire,
To shun the heat of Sol's infectious fire :
Immortal authors grace this cool retreat,
Of ancient times, and of a modern date.

Here would my praises and my fancy dwell ;
But it, alas, description does excel.
Oh may this sweet, this beautiful abode
Remain the charge of the eternal God.

A PASTORAL ENTERTAINMENT ⁽¹⁾

WHILE in heroic numbers some relate
The amazing turns of wise eternal fate ;
Exploits of heroes in the dusty field,
That to their name immortal honour yield ;
Grant me, ye powers, fast by the limpid spring
The harmless of the plain to sing.
A wreath of flowers culled from the
Is all the my humble muse demands.

Now blithsome shepherds, by the early dawn,
Their new shorn flocks drive to the dewy lawn ;
While, in a bleating language, each salutes
The welcome morning and their fellow brutes :
Then all preparèd for the rural feast,
And in their finest Sunday habits dressed ;
The crystal brook supplied the mirror's place,
. . . they bathed and viewed their cleanly face,
. and nymphs resorted to the fields
. pomp the country yields.

The place appointed was a spacious vale,
Fanned always by a cooling western gale,
Which in soft breezes through the meadows stray,
And steals the ripened fragrances away ;
Here every shepherd might his flocks survey,
Securely roam and take his harmless play ;
And here were flowers each shepherdess to grace,
On her fair bosom courting but a place.

SONG

Now in this vale beneath a grateful shade,
 By twining boughs of spreading made,
 On seats of homely turf themselves they place,
 And cheerfully enjoyed their rural feast,
 Consisting of the product of the fields,
 And all the luxury the country yields.

No maddening liquors spoiled their harmless mirth,
 But an untainted spring their thirst allayed,
 Which in meadows through the valley strayed.
 Thrice happy swains who spend your golden days
 In pastime ; and when night displays
 Her sable shade, to peaceful huts retire ;
 Can any man a sweeter bliss desire ?
 In ancient times so passed the smiling hour,
 When our first parents lived in Eden's bower,
 Ere care and trouble were pronounced
 Or sin had blasted the creation

SONG

HARD is the fate of him who loves,
 Yet dares not tell his trembling pain,
 But to the sympathetic groves,
 But to the lonely listening plain.

Oh ! when she blesses next your shade,
 Oh ! when her footsteps next are seen
 In flowery tracts along the mead,
 In fresher mazes o'er the green ;

Ye gentle spirits of the vale,
 To whom the tears of love are dear,
 From dying lilies waft a gale,
 And sigh my sorrows in her ear.

Oh ! tell her what she cannot blame,
 Though fear my tongue must ever bind :
 Oh ! tell her, that my virtuous flame
 Is, as her spotless soul, refined.

Not her own guardian angel eyes
 With chaster tenderness his care,
 Not purer her own wishes rise,
 Not holier her own sighs in prayer.
 But if, at first, her virgin fear
 Should start at love's suspected name,
 With that of friendship soothe her ear—
 True love and friendship are the same.

A NUPTIAL SONG

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN INSERTED IN THE FOURTH
 ACT OF *Sophonisba*

COME, gentle Venus ! and assuage
 A warring world, a bleeding age :
 For nature lives beneath thy ray,
 The wintry tempests haste away,
 A lucid calm invests the sea,
 Thy native deep is full of thee ;
 The flowering earth, where'er you fly,
 Is all o'er spring, all sun the sky.
 A genial spirit warms the breeze ;
 Unseen among the blooming trees,
 The feathered lovers tune their throat,
 The desert growls a softened note,
 Glad o'er the meads the cattle bound,
 And love and harmony go round.

But chief into the human heart
 You strike the dear delicious dart ;
 You teach us pleasing pangs to know,
 To languish in luxurious woe,
 To feel the generous passions rise,
 Grow good by gazing, mild by sighs ;
 Each happy moment to improve,
 And fill the perfect year with love.

SONG

Come, thou delight of heaven and earth !
 To whom all creatures owe their birth ;
 Oh, come, red-smiling, tender, come !
 And yet prevent our final doom.
 For long the furious god of war
 Has crushed us with his iron car,
 Has raged along our ruined plains,
 Has soiled them with his cruel stains,
 Has sunk our youth in endless sleep,
 And made the widowed virgin weep.
 Now let him feel thy wonted charms,
 Oh, take him to thy twining arms !
 And, while thy bosom heaves on his,
 While deep he prints the humid kiss,
 Ah, then his stormy heart control,
 And sigh thyself into his soul.

Thy son too, Cupid, we implore
 To leave the green Idalian shore.
 Be he, sweet god ! our only foe :
 Long let him draw the twanging bow,
 Transfix us with his golden darts,
 Pour all his quiver on our hearts,
 With gentler anguish make us sigh
 And teach us sweeter deaths to die.

SONG

ONE day the god of fond desire,
 On mischief bent, to Damon said,
 ‘ Why not disclose your tender fire,
 Not own it to the lovely maid ? ’

The shepherd marked his treacherous art,
 And, softly sighing, thus replied :
 ‘ ‘ Tis true, you have subdued my heart,
 But shall not triumph o’er my pride.

The slave, in private only bears
 Your bondage, who his love conceals ;
 But when his passion he declares,
 You drag him at your chariot-wheels.'

SWEET TYRANT LOVE

SWEET tyrant love, but hear me now !
 And cure while young this pleasing smart ;
 Or rather, aid my trembling vow,
 And teach me to reveal my heart.
 Tell her whose goodness is my bane,
 Whose looks have smiled my peace away,
 Oh ! whisper now she gives me pain,
 Whilst undesigning, frank, and gay.
 'Tis not for common charms I sigh,
 For what the vulgar beauty call ;
 'Tis not a cheek, a lip, an eye ;
 But 'tis the soul that lights them all.
 For that I drop the tender tear,
 For that I make this artless moan,
 Oh ! sigh it, love, into her ear,
 And make the bashful lover known.

ODE

TELL me, thou soul of her I love,
 Ah ! tell me, whither art thou fled ;
 To what delightful world above,
 Appointed for the happy dead ?
 Or dost thou, free, at pleasure, roam,
 And sometimes share thy lover's woe ;
 Where, void of thee, his cheerless home
 Can now, alas ! no comfort know ?

Oh ! if thou hoverest round my walk,
 While, under every well known tree,
 I to thy fancied shadow talk,
 And every tear is full of thee :

Should then the weary eye of grief,
 Beside some sympathetic stream,
 In slumber find a short relief,
 Oh, visit thou my soothing dream !

SONG

WHEN blooming spring
 Arrays the laughing fields in green,
 Then flowers in open air are seen,
 And warbling birds are heard to sing,
 Almighty love
 Doth sweetly move
 All nature through ;
 Then tell me, Chloe, why are you
 Averse thereto ;
 When blooming charms
 Invite your lover's circling arms ?
 Oh be no longer coy
 To love and share of joy.

SONGS FROM 'ALFRED'

TO PEACE

(From *Alfred*, Act I, Scene 1)

O PEACE ! the fairest child of heaven,
 To whom the sylvan reign was given,
 The vale, the fountain, and the grove,
 With every softer scene of love :
 Return, sweet peace ! and cheer the weeping swain ;
 Return, with ease and pleasure in thy train.

TO ALFRED

(From *Alfred*, Act I, Scene III)

FIRST SPIRIT

HEAR, Alfred, father of the state,
 Thy genius heaven's high will declare !
 What proves the hero truly great,
 Is never, never to despair :
 Is never to despair,

SECOND SPIRIT

Thy hope awake, thy heart expand,
 With all its vigour, all its fires.
 Arise, and save a sinking land !
 Thy country calls, and heaven inspires.

BOTH SPIRITS

Earth calls, and heaven inspires.

SWEET VALLEY, SAY

(From *Alfred*, Act I, Scene v)

SWEET valley, say, where, pensive lying,
 For me, our children, England, sighing,
 The best of mortals leans his head.
 Ye fountains, dimpled by my sorrow,
 Ye brooks that my complainings borrow,
 O lead me to his lonely bed :
 Or if my lover,
 Deep woods, you cover,
 Ah whisper where your shadows o'er him spread.
 'Tis not the loss of pomp and pleasure,
 Of empire, or of tinsel treasure,

That drops this tear, that swells this groan :
 No ; from a nobler cause proceeding,
 A heart with love and fondness bleeding,
 I breathe my sadly pleasing moan,
 With other anguish,
 I scorn to languish,
 For love will feel no sorrows but his own.

FROM THOSE ETERNAL REGIONS

(From *Alfred*, Act II, Scene III)

FROM those eternal regions bright,
 Where suns, that never set in night,
 Diffuse the golden day :
 Where spring, unfading, pours around,
 O'er all the dew-impearled ground,
 Her thousand colours gay :
 O whether on the fountain's flowery side,
 Whence living waters glide,
 Or in the fragrant grove,
 Whose shade embosoms peace and love,
 New pleasures all our hours employ,
 And ravish every sense with every joy !
 Great heirs of empire ! yet unborn,
 Who shall this island late adorn ;
 A monarch's drooping thought to cheer,
 Appear ! appear ! appear !

CONTENTMENT

(From *Alfred*, Act III, Scene v)

IF those who live in shepherd's bower,
 Press not the rich and stately bed :
 The new-mown hay and breathing flower
 A softer couch beneath them spread.

If those who sit at shepherd's board,
 Soothe not their taste by wanton art ;
 They take what nature's gifts afford,
 And take it with a cheerful heart.

If those who drain the shepherd's bowl,
 No high and sparkling wines can boast,
 With wholesome cups they cheer the soul,
 And crown them with the village toast.

If those who join in shepherd's sport,
 Gay dancing on the daisied ground,
 Have not the splendour of a court ;
 Yet love adorns the merry round.

RULE BRITANNIA !

(From *Alfred*, Act III, Scene v)

WHEN Britain first, at heaven's command,
 Arose from out the azure main,
 This was the charter of the land,
 And guardian angels sung this strain :
 ' Rule, Britannia, rule the waves ;
 Britons never will be slaves.'

The nations, not so blest as thee,
 Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall ;
 While thou shalt flourish great and free,
 The dread and envy of them all.
 ' Rule,' &c.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
 More dreadful, from each foreign stroke ;
 As the loud blast that tears the skies
 Serves but to root thy native oak
 ' Rule,' &c.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame ;
 All their attempts to bend thee down
 Will but arouse thy generous flame,
 But work their woe, and thy renown.
 ' Rule,' &c.

To thee belongs the rural reign ;
 Thy cities shall with commerce shine ;
 All thine shall be the subject main ;
 And every shore it circles, thine.
 ' Rule,' &c.

The muses, still with freedom found,
 Shall to thy happy coast repair :
 Blest isle ! with matchless beauty crowned,
 And manly hearts to guard the fair :
 ' Rule, Britannia, rule the waves,
 Britons never will be slaves.'

EPILOGUE TO AGAMEMNON

OUR bard, to modern epilogue a foe,
 Thinks such mean mirth, but deadens generous woe ;
 Dispels in idle air the moral sigh,
 And wipes the tender tear from pity's eye :
 No more with social warmth the bosom burns ;
 But all the unfeeling selfish man returns.

Thus he began :—And you approved the strain ;
 Till the next couplet sunk to light and vain.
 You checked him there.—To you, to reason just,
 He owns he triumphed in your kind disgust.
 Charmed by your frown, by your displeasure graced,
 He hails the rising virtue of your taste.
 Wide will its influence spread as soon as known :
 Truth, to be loved, needs only to be shown.

Confirm it, once, the fashion to be good :
(Since fashion leads the fool, and awes the rude)
No petulance shall wound the public ear ;
No hand applaud what honour shuns to hear ;
No painful blush the modest cheek shall stain ;
The worthy breast shall heave with no disdain.
Chastised to decency, the British stage
Shall oft invite the fair, invite the sage ;
Both shall attend well-pleased, well-pleased depart ;
Or if they doom the verse, absolve the heart.

PROLOGUE TO MALLET'S MUSTAPHA

SINCE Athens first began to draw mankind,
To picture life, and show the impassioned mind ;
The truly wise have ever deemed the stage
The moral school of each enlightened age.
There, in full pomp, the tragic muse appears,
Queen of soft sorrows, and of useful fears.
Faint is the lesson reason's rules impart :
She pours it strong, and instant through the heart.
If virtue is her theme, we sudden glow
With generous flame ; and what we feel, we grow.
If vice she paints, indignant passions rise ;
The villain sees himself with loathing eyes.
His soul starts, conscious, at another's groan,
And the pale tyrant trembles on his throne.

To-night, our meaning scene attempts to show
What fell events from dark suspicion flow ;
Chief when it taints a lawless monarch's mind,
To the false herd of flattering slaves confined,
The soul sinks gradual to so dire a state ;
Even excellence but serves to feed its hate :
To hate remorseless cruelty succeeds,
And every worth, and every virtue bleeds.

Behold, our author at your bar appears,
His modest hopes depressed by conscious fears.
Faults he has many—but to balance these,
His aim is honest and he strives to please ;
All slighter errors let indulgence spare,
And be his equal trial full and fair.
For this best British privilege we call,
Then, as he merits, let him stand or fall.

PROLOGUE TO TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA

BOLD is the man ! who, in this nicer age,
Presumes to tread the chaste corrected stage.
Now, with gay tinsel arts, we can no more
Conceal the want of nature's sterling ore.
Our spells are vanished, broke our magic wand,
That used to waft you over sea and land.
Before your light the fairy people fade,
The demons fly—the ghost itself is laid.
In vain of martial scenes the loud alarms,
The mighty prompter thundering out to arms,
The playhouse posse clattering from afar,
The close-wedged battle, and the din of war.
Now, even the senate seldom we convene ;
The yawning fathers nod behind the scene.
Your taste rejects the glittering false sublime,
To sigh in metaphor, and die in rhyme.
High rant is tumbled from his gallery throne :
Description, dreams, nay, similes are gone.

What shall we then, to please you how devise,
Whose judgment sits not in your ears and eyes ?
Thrice happy ! could we catch great Shakespeare's art,
To trace the deep recesses of the heart ;
His simple plain sublime, to which is given
To strike the soul with darted flame from heaven ;

Could we awake soft Otway's tender woe,
The pomp of verse and golden lines of Rowe.

We to your hearts apply : let them attend ;
Before their silent candid bar we bend.
If warmed, they listen, 'tis our noblest praise ;
If cold, they wither all the muse's bays.

EPILOGUE TO *TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA*

CRAMMED to the throat with wholesome moral stuff,
Alas ! poor audience ! you have had enough.
Was ever hapless heroine of a play
In such a piteous plight as ours to-day ?
Was ever woman so by love betrayed ?
Matched with two husbands, and yet—die a maid !
But bless me !—hold—What sounds are these I
hear ?—
I see the Tragic Muse herself appear.

The back scene opens, and discovers a romantic sylvan landscape ;
from which Mrs. Cibber, in the character of the Tragic Muse,
advances slowly to music, and speaks the following lines :—

Hence with your flippant epilogue, that tries
To wipe the virtuous tear from British eyes ;
That dares my moral, tragic scene profane,
With strains—at best, unsuiting, light, and vain.
Hence from the pure unsullied beams that play
In yon fair eyes where virtue shines—Away !

Britons, to you from chaste Castalian groves,
Where dwell the tender, oft unhappy loves ;
Where shades of heroes roam, each mighty name,
And court my aid to rise again to fame ;
To you I come, to freedom's noblest seat,
And in Britannia fix my last retreat.

In Greece and Rome I watched the public weal,
The purple tryant trembled at my steel :
Nor did I less o'er private sorrows reign,
And mend the melting heart with softer pain.
On France and you then rose my brightening star,
With social ray ; the arts are ne'er at war.
O, as your fire and genius stronger blaze,
As yours are generous freedom's bolder lays,
Let not the Gallic taste leave yours behind,
In decent manners and in life refined ;
Banish the motley mode to tag low verse,
The laughing ballad to the mournful hearse.
When through five acts your hearts have learnt to glow,
Touched with the sacred force of honest woe ;
O keep the dear impression on your breast,
Nor idly lose it for a wretched jest.

NOTES

CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

THIS poem was in the making for fifteen years, and was published in 1748, the year of Thomson's death. It is written in rhyme, and not in blank verse like *The Seasons*, *Liberty*, etc.

CANTO I

STANZA

4, line 5. The nightingale.

11, line 7. The goddess of Justice.

14, line 9. A dweller in Sybaris, the inhabitants of which city were notorious for their luxurious method of living.

17, line 8. Publius Æmilianus Scipio, who retired from public life to Gaeta.—T.

19, line 6. The ruler of the under-world.

30, line 1. Those islands on the western coast of Scotland called the Hebrides.—T.

38, line 8. Claude Lorrain, a great landscape painter, of France, 1600–1682.

„ line 9. Salvator Rosa, 1615–73, a celebrated Italian painter, poet and musician.

„ line 9. Nicholas Poussin. See note on *Liberty*, part 5, line 501.

STANZA (Canto 1)

- 40-41. This is not an imagination of the Author; there being in fact such an instrument called Æolus's Harp, which, when placed against a little rushing or current of air, produces the effect here described.—T.
- 42, line 3. Bagdad, an important city on the Tigris. In former times it was of greater standing than it is now.
- ,, line 6. The Arabian Caliphs had poets among the officers of their Court, whose office it was to do what is here mentioned.—T.
- 44, line 1. The god of dreams.
- ,, line 6. A famous Venetian painter, 1477-1576.
- 54, line 6. The Morning Star.—T.
- 57-59. Wm. Paterson, Thomson's friend and confidant.
60. The word portrait of this verse is usually considered to apply to the poet, Dr Armstrong.
- 62-64. These verses refer to another friend of Thomson, John Forbes, son of that Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, who was Lord Advocate and afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session. He was noted for his humane treatment in dealing with the rebels in the risings of 1715 and 1745.
- 65-66. George, first Baron Lyttelton.
67. James Quin (1693-1766), the celebrated actor and rival of Garrick. The reference in the first line is to Clodius Æsop, a famous Roman actor and friend of Cicero. Quin was a friend of Thomson and acted in some of his plays.

STANZA (Canto 1)

68. Thomson says: 'The following lines of this stanza were writ by a friend of the author', most probably by Lord Lyttelton; they refer, of course, to Thomson himself.
69. The Reverend Patrick Murdoch, Rector of Straddishall, in Suffolk, to whom Thomson also addressed the poem on page 180.
- 74-77. These stanzas were not written by Thomson, but by Dr Armstrong, at Thomson's request. They appear in Armstrong's *Miscellanies*, published in 1770.

CANTO II

- 13, line 5. Pygmalion was a sculptor, who, according to Greek legend, successfully entreated Aphrodite to endow with life a statue which he had made, and with which he had fallen in love.
- 21, line 2. Constantinople. 'Propontis' is the ancient name of the Sea of Marmora, on which Constantinople stands.
- 23, line 4. See note on *Liberty*, part 5, line 538.
- 25, line 1. The ancient name of Chester.
- 27, line 8. The goddess of harvest.
- 28, line 6. Pan was the god of the forests, Pales the god of the shepherds, Flora the goddess of spring, and Pomona the goddess of fruit-trees.
- 32, line 2. A magician in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, typifying hypocrisy.
- ,, line 5. The Fates.

STANZA (Canto 2)

- 43, line 2. A gladiator, who made use of a net, which he threw over his adversary.—T.
- 45, line 2. A lake near Naples, the legendary entrance into the under-world.
- 52, line 3. Virgil, whose family name was Maro.
 „ line 4. The present Mincio, a river of northern Italy.

LIBERTY

THIS poem, to use Thomson's own language, is an attempt 'to trace Liberty, from the first ages down to her excellent establishment in Great Britain'. It was published during the years 1734–36, in five separate parts, and dedicated to Frederick, Prince of Wales, in whom 'the cause and concerns of Liberty have so zealous a patron'. The text followed here is that of the 1738 edition, the last published during Thomson's lifetime, and, presumably, containing his final revisions.

PART I

LINE

1. C. R. Talbot, son of Lord Chancellor Talbot, with whom Thomson had travelled in France and Italy. He died in 1733, aged 23 years, before the poem was published. Thomson has a poem on the death of Lord Chancellor Talbot, printed at page 192.
42. Ausonia nominally refers to the country of the Ausones, in Italy, but the title here seems to include the whole of the Italian peninsula.
56. A division of Italy.

LINE

58. Now called Baja. It was a famous seaport and watering-place in ancient times. See also note to lines 290–91 *post*.
62. A branch of the Apennines to the east of Rome.
63. An affluent of the Tiber, containing a fine waterfall at Tivoli, fifteen miles north-east of Rome. The modern name of the river is the Teverone. The ancient name of the modern town of Tivoli was Tibur.
64. Praeneste, a town of ancient Italy, was famed for its Temple of Fortune. The town of Palestrina stands on the site. The composer, Palestrina, was a native of the place.
66. A town in Italy, south-east of Turin.
68. The aqueducts.
83. Lucius Junius Brutus and Virginius. Brutus was a Consul, in Roman legend, who, acting in his public capacity, condemned to death his sons, Titus and Tiberius, for having conspired to bring about the return of Tarquinius Sextus and overthrow the republic which had been formed on the expulsion of this king by Brutus.
- Virginius was the Plebeian who killed his daughter, rather than let her fall into the hands of Appius Claudius.
164. Falernia was a district in Campania, Italy, famous for its wines.
202. The river on which Rome stands.
242. The Via Sacra.—T.
247. Michael Angelo Buonaroti, Palladio, and Raphael d’Urbino; the three great modern masters in sculpture, architecture, and painting.—T.

LINE

268. The ancient name of Tivoli. *See note to line 63, ante.*
271. *See note to line 63, ante.*
274. Tusculum is reckoned to have stood at a place now called Grotta Ferrata, a convent of monks.—T.
- ,, Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman statesman and orator, 106–43 B.C.
- 276–7. The bay of Mola (anciently Formiæ) into which Homer brings Ulysses and his companions. Near Formiæ Cicero had a villa.—T.
280. The famous Roman poet, 70–19 B.C.
284. Naples was then governed by Austria.
288. Campagna Felice, adjoining to Capua.—T.
289. Hannibal, the famous Carthaginian general, wintered at Capua, 216–15 B.C.
- 290–91. The coast of Baiæ, which was formerly adorned with the works mentioned in the following lines ; and where, amidst many magnificent ruins, those of a temple erected to Venus are still to be seen.—T.
294. The Mediterranean to the west of Italy.
303. All along this coast the ancient Romans had their winter retreats ; and several populous cities stood.—T.
312. The present Lake Lucrine, near Naples.
313. A coast city of Campania.
391. A mountain range in Greece, sacred to the Muses.
392. A fountain on Mount Helicon, in Boetia, sacred to the Muses.

PART II

LINE

57. Civil Tyranny.—T.
63. The Pyramids.—T.
65. An eastern metaphor used in Scripture to express an Egyptian tyrant.—T.
105. Islands in the Ægean Sea, belonging to Greece.
109. The modern River Iris, which flows into the Mediterranean below Sparta.
114. The Spartan lawgiver, and the traditional founder of the code of laws of the Spartans.
138. A mountain near Athens.—T.
142. Two rivers, betwixt which Athens was situated.—T.
157. The Areopagus, or Supreme Court of Judicature, which Solon reformed and improved ; and the council of Four Hundred, by him instituted. In this council all affairs of state were deliberated, before they came to be voted in the assembly of the people.—T.
174. Or Olympia, the city where the Olympic games were celebrated.—T.
180. The Pass of Thermopylæ, on the road from North to South Greece, was successfully defended (in 480 b.c.) by Leonidas, King of Sparta, with a small army, against the Persian hosts under Xerxes.
184. The celebrated battlefield where 11,000 Greeks defeated 100,000 Persians.
197. Xenophon.—T.
222. Socrates.—T.
238. Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, and pupil of Plato, was born at Stagyra, near Thessalonica, 384 b.c.

LINE

242. The Greek philosopher, 342–270 B.C.
272. Homer.—T.
306. The goddess Aphrodite.
315. A famous fifth century Greek painter.
316. Apelles, the Grecian painter whose most famous work, 'Aphrodite Anadyomene', is here referred to.
323. When Demetrius besieged Rhodes, and could have reduced the city, by setting fire to that quarter of it where stood the house of the celebrated Protogenes, he chose rather to raise the siege, than hazard the burning of a famous picture called Jasylus, the masterpiece of that painter.—T.
437. King of Persia, 519–465 B.C.
442. The ancient capital of Elam, the abode of the Persian Kings.
453. The peace made by Antaicidas, the Lacedemonian admiral, with the Persians; by which the Lacedemonians abandoned all the Greeks established in the lesser Asia; to the dominion of the King of Persia.—T.
454. The son of Xerxes, King of Persia, 465–425 B.C.
459. Athens had been dismantled by the Lacedemonians, at the end of the first Peloponnesian war, and was at this time restored by Conon to its former splendour.—T.
470. The Peloponnesian war, which lasted from 431–404 B.C.
477. Nicias was one of the Athenian leaders in the Peloponnesian war. He was put to death in 413 B.C.

LINE

477. Conon was an Athenian general, and one of the leaders in the Peloponnesian war. *See also note to line 459, ante.*
478. Pelopidas and Epamondas were two Theban generals and friends, both of whom were instrumental in freeing their country from the Spartan yoke.
480. The battle of Cheronea, in which Philip of Macedon utterly defeated the Greeks.—T.

PART III

7. The last struggles of Liberty in Greece.—T.
8. One of the Ionian Islands, now known as Santa Maura.
9. Mountains in northern Greece.
10. The ancient name of the Roman Campagna.
14. Hesperia. The name given by the ancient Greeks to the country of the west, *i.e.* Italy, and the peninsula of Spain und Portugal.
15. Lacinium. A promontory in Calabria.—T.
,, Etruria. The ancient name of modern Tuscany.
32. Pythagoras was born at Samos, about 500 B.C.
34. Samos, over which then reigned the tyrant Polycrates.—T.
36. Now called Cotrone. It was here that Pythagoras founded his school of philosophy.
37. The southern parts of Italy and Sicily, so called because of the Grecian colonies there.—T.
38. His scholars were enjoined to silence for five years.—T.

LINE

57. The four cardinal virtues.—T.
75. See note to *Liberty*, part I, line 83.
128. Brennus. A leader of the Gauls, who plundered and burnt Rome about 390 B.C.
- „ Hannibal defeated the Romans near Cannæ in 216 B.C.
149. Camillus Marcus Furius, a Roman general, and several times Dictator.
150. A famous Roman general, called 'The Delayer', on account of his antipathy to pitched battles.
162. Cries of joy and pleasure.
163. A river flowing into the Tiber close to Rome. It was here that the Fabii were defeated, about 477 B.C.
165. Marcus Curtius, who, according to Roman legend, jumped into the chasm formed by an earthquake in Rome, which then closed up.
166. Marcus Atilius Regulus, a celebrated Roman general. After the defeat of the Roman army by the Carthaginians, in 255 B.C., Regulus was taken prisoner. Later on he was sent back to Rome on parole, in order to make peace terms. In this he was unsuccessful, and returned to Carthage, where, according to tradition, he was put to death.
188. Astrea, the goddess of Justice.
211. The fable of the belly and its members, told by Menenius Agrippa to the Roman people:
 'Once on a time the members refused to work for the lazy belly; but, as the supply of food was thus stopped, they found there was a necessary and mutual dependence between them.'

The tale is also mentioned in *Coriolanus*, Act I, sc. i.

LINE

232. The Atlantic Ocean.
243. The name given by the ancients to the River Don.
244. Mæotic Sea. Another name for the Sea of Azov. Rha. The ancient name of the Volga.—T.
245. The Caspian Sea.—T.
248. A Roman province of North-western Africa, corresponding to parts of Morocco and Algiers.
249. The oasis near Memphis, in Egypt, where there was the temple raised to the worship of the Egyptian deity, Amen, or Ammon.
261. A famous Roman general.
264. The King of Macedonia.—T.
286. The Isthmian games were celebrated at Corinth.—T.
290. *See note to line 261.*
317. The Roman emperor who captured Jerusalem, A.D. 70, to commemorate which event the Arch of Titus was erected in Rome.
347. Two Roman politicians of the second century, B.C., Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, and Caius Sempronius Gracchus.
369. Carthage.—T.
390. Tiberius Gracchus.—T.
394. Caius Gracchus.—T.
430. Marius was a famous Roman general, who caused the first Civil War, 88 B.C., through his rivalry with Sulla or Sylla.
438. A Roman lawyer who incurred the enmity of the party of Marius. *See previous note.*

LINE

451. *See note to line 430.*

465. Lucius Sergius Cataline was a follower of Sulla.
See also note to line 430, ante.

,, Publius Servilius Rullus, tribune of the people, proposed an Agrarian Law, in appearance very advantageous for the people, but destructive of their liberty; and which was defeated by the eloquence of Cicero, in his speech against Rullus.—T.

467. *See previous note.*

469. A supporter of Cicero against Catullus and his party. He committed suicide at Utica, in Numidia, on the victory of Cæsar at Thapsus.

473. Pompey the Great. A Roman general who led against Julius Cæsar in the Civil War, 49–48 B.C.

481. It was at Philippi that Mark Antony and Octavius defeated Brutus and Cassius.

482. Brutus died at Philippi. *See previous note.*

489. Tiberius, the infamous Roman emperor.

496. Thræsa Pætus, put to death by Nero. Tacitus introduces the account he gives of his death, thus: ‘After having inhumanly slaughtered so many illustrious men, he (Nero) burned at last with a desire of cutting off virtue itself in the person of Thræsa,’ etc.—T.

500. *See note to line 317, ante.*

505. Antoninus Pius, and his adopted son Marcus Aurelius, afterwards called Antoninus Philosophus.—T.

LINE

509. A famous Roman emperor, who, amongst other victories, annexed Dacia. Two arches were erected to commemorate his triumphs. *See also* following note.
511. Constantine's arch, to build which that of Trajan was destroyed, sculpture having been then almost entirely lost.—T.
512. A name generally given by the ancients to the country north of Greece.
513. The ancient name for the Balkans.
515. The ancient Sarmatia consisted of a vast tract of country running all along the north of Europe and Asia.—T.

PART IV

49. Church power, or ecclesiastical tyranny.—T.
52. Civil tyranny.—T.
86. The Crusaders.—T.
91. The corruptions of the Church of Rome.—T.
94. Vassalage, whence the attachment of clans to their chief.—T.
96. Duelling.—T.
123. The Hierarchy.—T.
141. The Hercules of Farnese.—T.
149. A statue in the Vatican, representing the legendary slayer of the Calydonian Boar.
153. The Fighting Gladiator.—T.
156. The Dying Gladiator.—T.
164. Apollo of Belvidere.—T.
175. Venus of Medici.—T.
185. The group of Laocoön and his two sons, destroyed by two serpents.—T.

INE

186. See *Aeneid*, II, verses 199–227.—T.
208. It is reported of Michael Angelo Buonaroti, the most celebrated master in modern sculpture, that he wrought with a kind of inspiration, or enthusiastical fury, which produced the effect here mentioned.—T.
- 213–14. Esteemed the two finest pieces of modern sculpture.—T.
230. Raphael Sanzio, the famous Italian painter, 1483–1520.
244. The school of the Caracci.—T.
266. The River Arno runs through Florence.—T.
269. The republics of Florence, Pisa, Lucca, and Sienna. They formerly have had very cruel wars together, but are now all peaceably subject to the Great Duke of Tuscany, except it be Lucca, which still maintains the form of a republic.—T.
282. The Genoese territory is reckoned very populous ; but the towns and villages for the most part lie hid among the Apennine rocks and mountains.—T.
284. According to Dr. Burnet's system of the Deluge. —T.
290. Andrea Doria was a famous statesman and admiral of Genoa.
293. Venice was the most flourishing city in Europe, with regard to trade, before the passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope and America was discovered.—T.
294. Those who fled to some marshes in the Adriatic gulf, from the desolation spread over Italy by an irruption of the Huns, first founded there this famous city, about the beginning of the fifth century.—T.

LINE

305. Venice is sometimes called ‘The Queen of the Adriatic.’ Although even now Venice is a great trading centre, the Republic was formerly one of the greatest commercial powers of the world.
319. Great Britain.—T.
325. The Swiss Cantons.—T.
329. Geneva, situated on the Lacus Lemanus, a small state, but noble example of the blessings of civil and religious liberty. It is remarkable that since the founding of this Republic not one citizen has been so much as suspected to have been guilty of corruption or public rapine. A virtue this! meriting the attention of every Briton.—T.
- ,, The River Rhone flows through the Lake of Geneva, sometimes called Lake Leman.
347. It is reported of the Swiss, that, after having been long absent from their native country, they are seized with such a violent desire of seeing it again, as affects them with a kind of languishing indisposition, called the Swiss sickness.—T.
366. The Hans towns.—T.
372. The Swedes.—T.
377. *See note to line 680, post.*
624. Great Britain was peopled by the Celtae, or Gauls.—T.
630. The Druids, among the ancient Gauls and Britons, had the care and direction of all religious matters.—T.
645. The Roman Empire.—T.

LINE

647. Caledonia, inhabited by the Scots and Picts ; whither a great many Britons, who would not submit to the Romans, retired.—T.
652. The wall of Severus, built upon Adrian's rampart, which ran for eighty miles quite across the country, from the mouth of the Tyne to Solway Frith.—T.
654. Irruptions of the Scots and Picts.—T.
658. The Roman empire being miserably torn by the northern nations, Britain was for ever abandoned by the Romans in the year 426 or 427.—T.
662. The Britons applying to Ætius the Roman general for assistance, thus expressed their miserable condition :—‘ We know not which way to turn us. The Barbarians drive us to sea, and the sea forces us back to the Barbarians ; between which we have only the choice of two deaths, either to be swallowed up by the waves, or butchered by the sword.’ —T.
665. King of the Silures, famous for his great exploits, and accounted the best general Great Britain had ever produced. The Silures were esteemed the bravest and most powerful of all the Britons ; they inhabited Herefordshire, Radnorshire, Brecknockshire, Monmouthshire, and Glamorganshire.—T.
666. Queen of the Iceni : her story is well known.—T.
680. It is certain, that an opinion was fixed and general among them (the Goths) that death was but the entrance into another life ; that all men who lived lazy and unactive lives, and died natural deaths, by sickness or by age, went into vast caves under ground, all

LINE

dark and miry, full of noisome creatures usual to such places, and there for ever grovelled in endless stench and misery. On the contrary, all who gave themselves to warlike actions and enterprises, to the conquest of their neighbours and the slaughter of their enemies, and died in battle, or of violent deaths upon bold adventures or resolutions, went immediately to the vast hall or palace of Odin, their god of war, who eternally kept open house for all such guests, where they were entertained at infinite tables, in perpetual feasts and mirth, carousing in bowls made of the skulls of their enemies they had slain; according to the number of whom, every one in these mansions of pleasure was the most honoured and best entertained.—

Sir William Temple's Essay on Heroic Virtue.
—T.

701. The seven kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons, considered as being united into one common government, under a general in chief or monarch, and by the means of an assembly general, or Wittenagemot.—T.
704. Egbert, King of Wessex, who, after having reduced all the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy under his dominion, was the first king of England.—T.
709. A famous Danish standard was called Reafan, or Raven. The Danes imagined that, before a battle, the Raven wrought upon this standard clapped its wings or hung down its head, in token of victory or defeat.—T.
733. Alfred the Great, renowned in war, and no less famous in peace for his many excellent institutions, particularly that of juries.—T.

LINE

- 736 The battle of Hastings, in which Harold II, the last of the Saxon kings, was slain, and William the Conqueror made himself master of England.—T.
748. Edward the Confessor, who reduced the West Saxon, Mercian, and Danish laws into one body; which from that time became common to all England, under the name of ‘The Laws of Edward.’—T.
755. The Curfew Bell (from the French *couverfeu*) which was rung every night at eight of the clock, to warn the English to put out their fires and candles, under the penalty of a severe fine.—T.
762. The New Forest in Hampshire; to make which the country for above thirty miles in compass was laid waste.—T.
775. On the 5th of June, 1215, King John, met by the Barons on Runnemede, signed the Great Charter of Liberties, or Magna Charta.—T.
785. The league formed by the Barons, during the reign of John, in the year 1213, was the first confederacy made in England in defence of the nation’s interest against the King.—T.
796. The commons are generally thought to have been first represented in parliament towards the end of Henry the Third’s reign. To a parliament called in the year 1264, each county was ordered to send four knights, as representatives of their respective shires: and to a parliament called in the year following, each county was ordered to send, as their representatives, two knights, and each city and borough as many citizens and burgesses. Till then, history makes no mention of them;

LINE

whence a very strong argument may be drawn, to fix the original of the House of Commons to that era.—T.

- 840. Edward III. Henry V.—T.
- 865. Three famous battles, gained by the English over the French.—T.
- 868. During the Civil Wars, betwixt the families of York and Lancaster.
- 873. Henry VII.—T.
- 879. The famous Earl of Warwick, during the reigns of Henry VI and Edward IV, was called ‘The King Maker.’—T.
- 881. Permitting the Barons to alienate their lands.—T.
- 895. Henry VIII. Of papal dominion.—T.
- 904. John Wickliff, doctor of divinity, who, towards the close of the fourteenth century, published doctrines very contrary to those of the church of Rome, and particularly denying the papal authority. His followers grew very numerous, and were called Lollards.—T.
- 906. Suppression of monasteries.—T.
- 912. The Spanish West Indies.—T.
- 923. Queen Elizabeth.
- 931. The dominion of the house of Austria.—T.
- 937. The Spanish Armada. Rapin says, that after proper measures had been taken, the enemy was expected with uncommon alacrity.—T.
- 957. James I.—T.
- 966. Elector Palatine, and who had been chosen King of Bohemia, but was stripped of all his dominions and dignities by the Emperor

LINE

- Ferdinand, while James the First, his father-in-law, being amused from time to time, endeavoured to mediate a peace.—T.
970. The monstrous and till then unheard-of doctrines of divine indefeasible hereditary right, passive obedience, etc.—T.
975. The parties of Whig and Tory.—T.
982. Charles II.—T.
991. Parliaments.—T.
1003. Ship-money.—T.
1004. Monopolies.—T.
1008. The raging High-Church sermons of these times, inspiring at once a spirit of slavish submission to the court, and of bitter persecution against those whom they call Church and State Puritans.—T.
1013. John Hampden. 1594–1643. An English statesman famous as having refused to pay the tax of ship money.
1045. The Restoration.—T.
1048. Charles II.—T.
1049. Court of Wards.—T.
1075. Dunkirk.—T.
1077. The war in conjunction with France, against the Dutch.—T.
1078. The Triple Alliance.—T.
1080. Under Louis XI.—T.
1084. A standing army, raised without the consent of Parliament.—T.
1095. The charters of corporations.—T.
1096. Algernon Sidney, son of the second Earl of Leicester. Born in 1622, he was beheaded with Lord Russell (son of the fifth Earl of

LINE

Bedford) in 1683, for alleged complicity in the Rye House Plot.

1098. The notorious Judge Jeffreys.

1105. James II.

1110. The open space in London, used as a burning-place for heretics.

1119. The Prince of Orange, in his passage to England; though his fleet had been at first dispersed by a storm, was afterwards extremely favoured by several changes of wind.—T.

1122. Rapin, in his History of England. ‘The third of November the fleet entered the Channel, and lay by between Calais and Dover, to stay for the ships that were behind. Here the Prince called a council of war. It is easy to imagine what a glorious show the fleet made. Five or six hundred ships in so narrow a channel, and both the English and French shores covered with numberless spectators, are no common sight. For my part, who was then on board the fleet, I own it struck me extremely.’—T.

1126. The Prince placed himself in the main body, carrying a flag with English colours, and their highnesses’ arms surrounded with this motto, ‘The Protestant religion and the Liberties of England,’ and underneath the motto of the house of Nassau, ‘*Je maintiendrai*’ (I will maintain)—Rapin.—T.

1127. The English fleet.—T.

1130. The King’s army.—T.

1143. By the Bill of Rights and the Act of Succession.—T.

1144. William III.—T.

PART V

LINE

69. Tin.—T.
119. The Sahara.
179. The Phrygian king, who, according to Greek legend, offended the god Dionysus and was given the ears of an ass.
202. The Roman general who was one of the assassins of Cæsar.
285. Lord Molesworth, in his account of Denmark, says: ‘It is observed that, in limited monarchies and commonwealths, a neighbourhood to the seat of the government is advantageous to the subjects; whilst the distant provinces are less thriving and more liable to oppression.’—T.
292. The founder of Rome, according to legend, and its first king.
331. Numidia was a country in North Africa, afterwards a Roman province, corresponding in the present day to Algeria.
388. Rome’s ancient rival, the site of which was near the present city of Turin. Nothing now remains of it but a few ruins.
409. The famous retreat of the ten thousand was chiefly conducted by Xenophon.—T.
- 411 *et seq.* Epaminondas, after having beat the Lacedemonians and their allies, in the battle of Leuctra, made an incursion, at the head of a powerful army, into Laconia. It was now six hundred years since the Dorians had possessed this country, and in all that time the face of an enemy had not been seen within their territories.—Plutarch, *Agesilaus*.—T.
424. Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman statesman and orator, 106–43 B.C.

LINE

425. Cicero, while consul, was instrumental in defeating the conspiracy of Catiline. See note on *Liberty*, part 3, line 465.
458. Louis XIV.—T.
473. The canal of Languedoc.
- 475–477. The hospitals for foundlings and invalids.
487. Nicholas Boileau-Despréaux, 1636–1711: a famous French satirist and writer.
488. Pierre Corneille, 1606–84: a famous French dramatist.
489. Jean Baptiste Racine, 1639–99: a celebrated French poet and dramatist.
492. Jean Baptiste Poquelin, a Frenchman, who took the stage name of Molière, was celebrated both as an actor and a writer of comedies. 1622–73.
496. The Academies of Sciences, of the Belles Lettres, and of Painting.—T.
501. Nicolas Poussin, 1594–1665, a celebrated French painter, both of landscapes and historical subjects.
503. Engraving.—T.
508. A celebrated French sculptor, 1630–1715.
518. The tapestry of the Gobelins.—T.
519. Louis the XIV.
538. Caius Cilnius Mæcenas was not only a famous Roman statesman, but a patron of contemporary writers, more particularly of Horace and Virgil.
55. A district in the south of France.
55. Lord Chancellor Talbot, was a patron of Thomson, to whose memory he wrote a long poem, printed at page 192.
56. Georgia, of which Savannah is a seaport, is

LINE

one of the southern of the United States of North America. It was colonized under the direction of General Oglethorpe, and named after George II, in 1733.

- 663. The Foundling Hospital.—T.
- 690. The third Earl of Burlington (1695–1753) was famous as an architect. Of his many creations Burlington House is perhaps the most important.
- 698. At his Twickenham Villa.—T.
- 699. Allen, Earl Bathurst, (1684–1775). He planted the Okley woods near Cirencester, where he lived.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

BRITANNIA

It is generally considered that this poem was written about 1727. It was published anonymously in 1729, and is mainly devoted to an attack on the ministry for not suppressing the outrages of Spain on our commerce. Thus the spirit of Britannia says :—

‘ . . . Unchastised, the insulting Spaniard dares
Infest the trading flood, full of vain war
Despise my navies, and my merchants seize.’

- LINE 17. Frederick, Prince of Wales, eldest son of George II.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF MR AIKMAN, THE PAINTER

AIKMAN was a Scottish portrait painter, and friend of Thomson. He was born at Caerney, in Forfarshire, in 1682, and died in 1731 in Leicester Fields. The poem was written at the time of his death, but not published in full till 1792.

LINE 3. See note on *Liberty*, part 4, line 230.
 „ 4. A famous Venetian painter, 1477–1576.

POEMS TO AMANDA

THIS lady was a Miss Elizabeth Young, with whom Thomson was in love. She married instead an Admiral Campbell.

To AMANDA

VERSE 3, line 2. The nightingale.

AD PHOEBUM

THIS poem, like the previous ones, was most likely inspired by 'Amanda'.

COME, GENTLE GOD

See previous note.

To MYRA

HERE, again, Myra was really 'Amanda'.

To FORTUNE

As originally written, the poem consisted of the first four verses only. Afterwards the fourth verse was cancelled and the fifth substituted, making still another poem to 'Amanda'.

POETICAL EPISTLE TO SIR WILLIAM BENNET, BART., OF GRUBBAT

THIS is, perhaps, the earliest of Thomson's known poems. It was probably written while the poet was between the age of 14 and 16. Marlefield, *see* page 232, was the seat of Sir Wm. Bennet.

POEM TO THE MEMORY OF MR CONGREVE

WILLIAM Congreve, the famous English dramatist, was born in 1670, and died in 1729. This poem is an unacknowledged one. It was first printed as one of Thomson's productions in 1843, when Mr. P. Cunningham edited it for the Percy Society, on the suggestion of the Rev. H. J. Cary. In the preface to the publication arguments are given to prove the poem as being by Thomson. The text of that issue has been followed here.

LINE

- 71. The first Earl of Halifax, Congreve's patron.
- 79. Authorities differ as to who is meant here. John Dennis, and Colley Cibber, the actor and dramatist have both been mentioned.
- 80. The same remark applies here as in the previous note, and 'Cenus' has been identified as Aaron Hill, the poet and man of many parts, and Jeremy Collier, a Non-juring clergyman who made a violent attack upon the stage of the time.
- 113. Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, to whom this poem is dedicated, was the daughter of the great Duke, whom she succeeded in the title, by special terms in the peerage granted to him.
- 117. The first Earl of Godolphin, and friend of Marlborough. His son married the Duchess of Marlborough referred to in the previous note.

LISY'S PARTING WITH HER CAT

THIS is one of Thomson's juvenile poems. Lisy was his second sister.

STANZAS . . . SENT TO MR LYTTELTON, SOON
AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE

LORD LYTTELTON's first wife was a Miss Lucy Fortescue. She was married in 1742, and died in 1747.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER

MRS THOMSON died May 10, 1725.

To THE REVEREND PATRICK MURDOCH

A FELLOW-STUDENT with Thomson at Edinburgh University, who afterwards edited a handsome, though incomplete edition of the poet's works. Murdoch is referred to in stanza 69 of the first canto of *The Castle of Indolence*, and he is also supposed to be referred to in the next poem, but this is hardly likely. Murdoch was a friend of Thomson, while the poem is very personal and offensive.

THE INCOMPARABLE Soporific DOCTOR

See previous note.

]

A POEM, SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF SIR ISAAC
NEWTON

SIR ISAAC NEWTON died March 20th, 1727. The poem, which appeared in the same year, was dedicated to Sir Robert Walpole.

LINES 157-61. It was at one time thought that a life of Newton would be written by his niece's husband, Mr Conduit, but it was never published.

To HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES
THIS ode was written on the birth of the first child
of Frederick, Prince of Wales, 31st July, 1737. *The*

Gentleman's Magazine of the time contains some entertaining letters showing that the King—George II—was indignant at the fact that the expected event had not been mentioned to him sooner than was the case!

EPITAPH ON MISS STANLEY

MISS STANLEY was the daughter of George Stanley, of Poultons, Hampshire, and granddaughter, through her mother, to Sir Hans Sloane. She died in 1738, at the age of eighteen.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD TALBOT

LORD CHANCELLOR TALBOT, Thomson's patron, died in 1737. His son, C. R. Talbot had previously travelled for some time with Thomson in France and Italy. See note to *Liberty*, part 1, line 1. The text followed here is that of the edition published in 1738.

LINE

- 73. The goddess of Justice.
- 230. Bishop of Derry.
- 267. The famous Greek philosopher, 470–399 B.C.
- 283. Thomson is here addressing the new Lord Talbot.

ON BEAUTY

- 21. The nightingale.
- 58. Thomson seems to have been fond of the crinoline.
- 65. A famous Scottish pastoral poet, 1686–1758. The reference here is to his poem, *Tartana, or the Plaid*, consisting of nearly 400 lines, written in 1721.
- 75. In ancient times a district in southern Greece, famous for its rural simplicity.

LINE

81. Edinburgh.
82. See note to line 58.

AN ODE ON ÆOLUS'S HARP

ÆOLUS's harp is a musical instrument which plays with the wind, invented by Mr Oswald ; its properties are fully described in *The Castle of Indolence*.—T.

LINE 11. Jeremiah.—T.

THE HAPPY MAN

THIS poem was addressed to Mr Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe.

ON THE HOOP

See also notes 'On Beauty', line 58.

LINE 19. Edinburgh.

HYMN ON SOLITUDE

THIS poem was the subject of much alteration and revision by Thomson. The lines as printed are those in Ralph's *Miscellaneous Poems*, issued in 1729. Editions published since Thomson's death differ from this one, it is true, but we think this the more authoritative.

LINE 43. The muse of astronomy.

49. Lycidas. One of the characters in Virgil's third *Bucolic*.

Lycon. A Greek philosopher of the 3rd century.

ON THE REPORT OF A WOODEN BRIDGE TO BE
BUILT AT WESTMINSTER

THE present Westminster Bridge was built in 1856-62. It replaced one erected 1739-50. The original

intention was to have a wooden bridge, but the idea was abandoned after the great frost of 1739.

LINE 1. The building of Westminster Hall was begun by William Rufus.

LINES ON MARLEFIELD

WHEN this poem was written Marlefield was the seat of Sir William Bennet, Bart., of Grubat. *See also* poem printed on page 170.

ALFRED

THIS masque was written by Thomson and Mallet together, so it is by no means certain that any of the songs are by Thomson alone. This applies with equal force to 'Rule Britannia!' although it is usually conceded that it is the work of Thomson.

PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES

THOMSON's plays are not included in this volume, but as some of the prologues and epilogues to them are written in rhyme by Thomson, it has been thought advisable to give them here.

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